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ALIVARDI AND HIS TIMES

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BY

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TO
MY FATHER

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PREFACE

The middle of the eighteenth century forms a critical epoch in the History of India. It witnessed the virtual collapse of the Imperial authority at Delhi, and the resultant tendency on the part of Indian and non-Indian adventurers to try their luck in its outlying provinces. Thus Alivardi, an enterprising adventurer, seized the Government of Bengal in April, 1740 A.D., and ruled it as a practically independent state till his death in the month of April, 1756 A.D. The weakening of the Imperial authority was also coincident with the rise of several other factors, which destroyed all chances of a progressive and peaceful government of this virtually independent province of Bengal. The most significant of these, from the standpoint of the history of the Bengal *subah*, was the ambition of the triumphant Marātha imperialism of the time to find an outlet for its expansion in the north-east and the consequent intrusion of the Marāthas into the very heart of the *subah*. For about a decade, repeated Marātha inroads terribly embarassed the Government of Bengal, caused havoc and consternation among her people, disturbed the various aspects of her economic life, and entailed not an insignificant drain on her financial resources. The old Nawāb made earnest efforts to heal the wounds inflicted on his province by the Marātha hordes, but was not spared long enough to effect a complete recovery. Then the responsible task of governing Bengal, at a critical time, by keeping its military, landed and mercantile aristocracy under proper control, by restraining the growing ambition of the foreign trading Companies, and by taking effective steps to safeguard its economic interests, devolved on his young grandson, Sirāj-ud-daulah. There are some evidences to show that the latter was not quite unmindful of these. But his career as a Nawāb was a big tragedy, which

was due, more than anything else, to his ill-fated attempts to check the forces that had already appeared in the time of his predecessor, who had, however, tactfully managed to utilize these to his own advantage. So the history of Alivardi's regime, that is, of the period immediately before Plassey, is important and instructive from several points of view. One has to make a critical study of it in order to understand the genesis and significance of the political and the economic revolutions in Bengal since the middle of the eighteenth century, no less powerful and epoch-making than the other better known revolutions of the same period.

The history of this period, in its political, economic, and social aspects, had not been exhaustively studied so long with adequate reference to the different kinds of original sources that are available to students of history. I have tried it in my own humble way after about ten years' careful study of the following sources [1] :—

(1) Contemporary works in Persian ;
(2) Records of the British East India Company, both published and unpublished ;
(3) The Chandernagore Correspondence (in French);
(4) Accounts, memoirs, and journals, left by contemporary and semi-contemporary European writers, travellers, and servants of the several East India companies ;
(5) 'Selections from the Peshwā Daftar' and 'Aitihasik Patra-vyavahār' (in Marāthi);
(6) Contemporary Literature—Bengali and Sanskrit.[2]

Some contemporary works in Persian, like *Ahwāl-i-Aliwārdī Khān* by Yusuf Ali, the *Waqāi Fath Bangālah* by Muhammad Wafa, the *Dastur-ul-Inshā* by Munsī Vijayrām, and the

[1] A detailed and critical description of the sources has been given in the bibliography to this book.

[2] I plodded through a mass of contemporary Oriya and Hindi literary fragments, but unluckily came across no materials useful for my purpose.

Dastur-ul-Inshā by Munsī Shaikh Yār Muhammad Qalandar, have been used here for the first time for historical purposes. Yusuf Ali's book stands unique as a store-house of valuable historical details, gathered by the author from personal observation and experience. No less important is the monumental historical work, *Siyar-ul-mutakherin*, by the Bihār historian, Ghulām Husain. The *Tārikh-i-Bangālah* by Salimullah, the *Muzaffarnāmah* by Karam Ali, and the *Riyāz-us-salātin* by Ghulām Husain Salim, have supplied me with many useful details. I have also critically studied the *Khulāṣat-ut-Tawārikh* by Kalyān Singh, the *Rāhat-ul-Arwāh* by Muhammad Rāhat, and the *Imād-us-Saādat* by Ghulām Ali, all of which belong to comparatively late dates and are in the main based on the works of the previous writers.

As for the records of the East India Company, some unpublished ones have been brought to light by me, I believe, for the first time, and the published ones, some of which had been previously studied by scholars, have been utilized here in a more comprehensive and systematic manner. The value of the unpublished records, preserved in the Imperial Record Department, as a source for the scientific reconstruction of the History of Modern India, in Political, Economic and Social aspects, can hardly be over-estimated. These are mostly free from such personal prejudices as the writers of professed court-chronicles cannot generally overcome, are full of numerous significant details of much historical importance, and are very helpful from the standpoint of chronological accuracy.

Contemporary literature has also proved to be a fruitful source of information regarding the history of this period. It is perhaps for the first time that eighteenth century literature has been utilized to any great extent for historical purposes. I have studied critically the Bengali work, *Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa*, by Gaṅgārāma, who, as an eye-witness, gives an accurate and detailed description of the Marātha raids into Bengal till the assassination of Bhāskar Paṇḍit. Some facts have been gleaned

from the *Annadāmaṅgala* of the contemporary Bengali poet Bhāratacandra. A short Sanskrit work entitled *Citracampu*, written by Vāṇeśvara Vidyālaṅkāra in November 1744 A.D., has supplied me with some facts relating to the ravages and atrocities committed by the Marāthas in the Burdwān district. Further, I have tried my humble best to recognize the value of incidental glimpses of economic and social life in some other works of contemporary writers.

In the first two chapters, I have traced the history of Alivardi's early life, his rise to *subahdārship*, and the consolidation of his authority in Bengal, Bihār and Orissā. The third chapter contains a detailed account of the Marātha invasions of Bengal and an estimate of their effects on her history. This chapter, based on a careful study of contemporary Persian, English, Bengali, and Sanskrit sources, had been written out in full by the end of March, 1929, when it was sent to Rev. H. Heras, S.J., M.A., Director of Indian Historical Research Institute, Bombay, who kindly published it in several instalments in the *Journal of the Bombay Historical Society* since September, 1930. I read a short paper entitled 'The Social, Economic, and Political Effects of the Marātha Invasions of Bengal' before the All-India Sixth Oriental Conference at Patna in December, 1930. The full paper was read by me in two extraordinary meetings of the Historical and Archæological Society, Patna College, in October, 1931. It has been subsequently improved, in certain respects, from the study of some Marāthī records, French correspondence and Sir Jadunath Sarkar's admirable volume entitled *Fall of the Mughal Empire*.

In the fourth chapter, I have given an account of the Afghān insurrections in Bihār, and have tried to explain their bearing on the history of the Bengal *subah* and also that of northern India as a whole. In the fifth chapter, an attempt has been made to indicate the relations between Nawāb Alivardi and the European traders in Bengal, espe-

cially the English. In the sixth chapter, I have brought to a close the story of Alivardi's life, and endeavoured to form a critical estimate of his character and administration. The seventh chapter contains a detailed account of Bengal's commerce in its different aspects—Asiatic, Inter-provincial, and European. It has been written in three sections. Section A deals with the 'Asiatic Trade,' Section B with 'Inter-provincial Trade' and Section C with 'English Factories and Investments.' In the eighth chapter, I have tried to describe the different aspects of the general economic condition of Bengal, such as '*Agriculture*,' '*Markets and Prices of Articles*,' and '*Manufacturing Industries*.' It has not been quite possible for me to write these sections in such a comprehensive and connected manner as can be done in accounts of Indian economic life of modern times, because of the comparative lack of exhaustive and well-connected documents and statistics for those days. But, I believe, I have turned to account almost every original source, available here, to collect information relating to these topics.

In the ninth chapter, I have endeavoured to give an accurate, though incomplete, picture of the social life and customs of the people of Bengal, during one of the most momentous periods in her annals, from a study of various sources. A more detailed account of the economic and social conditions of Bengal, during the mid-eighteenth century as a larger period, has been given by me in my *Studies in the History of the Bengal Subah, Vol. I.* In the concluding chapter, I have pointed out the importance and significance of the period under review.

The maps, attached to this volume, have been prepared by me after studying the map in *Plaisted's Journals*, the sheets of *Rennell's Bengal Atlas*, the modern Survey maps, and the maps in the District Gazetteers. I have taken much care to be as far accurate as possible regarding the topography of cities, towns, villages, and rivers, mentioned in this thesis.

Besides my personal knowledge of some places in West Bengal and Bihār, I have consulted the maps referred to above, and have gathered information, where necessary, by corresponding with my friends here and there.

The photographs of Nawab Alivardi, and of the gun and the sword used by him, have been obtained by me from the palace of the Nawāb Bāhādur of Murshidābād, Amir-ul-Omrah, K.C.S.I., K.C.V.O., through the generosity of his Manager, who deserves my sincere thanks for it.

I am conscious of the fact that the book could not be made as free from defects as I would have wished. For this, I crave the indulgence of the learned readers, whose kind and relevant suggestions would be thankfully accepted and utilized by me for improvement of it in future.

For the preparation of this volume, I am much indebted to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Kt., C.I.E., who not only lent me the use of some of his rare books but also kindly helped me with many valuable suggestions. I am also under a heavy debt of gratitude to Professor Dr. S. C. Sarkar, M.A., D.Phil. (Oxon.), Head of the History Department, Patna College, who with great zeal and love guided me in my work from day to day. I take this opportunity to pay my best regards to my kind and affectionate teachers of history in the Calcutta University, Professors Dr. S. N. Sen, B.Litt. (Oxon.), M.A., Ph.D. (now Keeper of Records of the Government of India), Dr. H. C. Raychaudhuri, M.A., Ph.D., Dr. N. C. Banerjee, M.A , Ph.D , and Sreejut Tripurari Chakravarty, M.A., whose never-failing encouragement has always been a source of inspiration to me in all my humble literary activities. I am grateful also to my friends and colleagues, Professor S. H. Askari, M.A , B.L., Assistant Professor of History, Patna College, and Sreejut Sachindra-nath Chatterjee, Dip. in Geography (London), of Patna Science College, for the assistance I received from the former in the matter of utilizing the original Persian manuscripts and from the latter in the preparation of maps. Another friend and

colleague of mine, Professor Jagadish Narayan Sarkar, M.A., of Patna College, is entitled to my cordial thanks for his making some useful suggestions, particularly in respect of preparing the maps. I am further thankful to Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee, M.A., B.L., Barrister-at-Law, D.Litt., ex-Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, to Sreejut Jogeshchandra Chakravorti, M.A., Registrar, Calcutta University, and to Mr. D. Ganguli, Superintendent of the Calcutta University Press, but for whose kind help the publication of the book might not have been possible. My hearty thanks are also due to Mr. A. F. M. Abdul Ali, M.A., F.R.S.L., late Keeper of Records of the Government of India, and his staff, for the facilities they gave me in studying their Records. My friends and pupils, Messrs. H. R. Ghoshal, M.A., B.L., D. B. Trivedi, M.A., Research Scholars, Patna College, and A. K. Mitra, B.A., have kindly helped me to prepare the index, for which I thank them sincerely.

Patna College, Patna,
BIHAR, 1939.

KALIKINKAR DATTA

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ain	...	Ain-i-Akbari (Blochmann and Jarret).
B. E.	...	Basumatī Press Edition.
Bayān	...	Bayān-i-Waqāi by Khawjah Abdul Karim.
Bhāratacandra	...	Bhāratacandra's Granthāvalī.
Bengal Subah	...	Studies in the History of the Bengal Subah by K. K. Datta.
Bolt's *Considerations*	...	Considerations on Indian Affairs by William Bolts.
C. R.	...	Calcutta Review.
C. P. C.	...	Calendar of Persian Correspondence.
Craufurd, *Sketches*	...	Sketches relating to the history, religion, learning, etc., of the Hindoos by Quintin Craufurd.
Dastur	...	Dastur-ul-Inshā by Munsī Vijayrām.
Dow, *Hindostan*	...	The History of Hindostan translated by Lieut.-Col. Alexander Dow with his own dissertations.
Elliot	...	Elliot and Dowson, The History of India as told by its own historians.
Grose	...	A Voyage to the East Indies by John Henry Grose.
Hill	...	Bengal in 1756-57 by S. C. Hill.
Holwell, I. H. E.	...	Interesting Historical Events by J. Z. Holwell.
Imād	...	Imād-us-Saādat by Ghulām Ali.
I. R. D.	...	Imperial Record Department.

J. B. O. R. S.	...	Journal of the Bihār and Orissā Research Society.
J. A. S. B.	...	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
J. R. A. S.	...	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (London).
Karam Ali	...	Muzaffarnāmah by Karam Ali.
Long	...	Selections from Unpublished Records of Government, Vol. I, by Rev. J. Long.
Orme, *Indostan*	...	A History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan by Robert Orme.
Original Papers	...	Original papers relating to the disturbances in Bengal from 1759 to 1764.
Rājwadé	...	Marāthānchyā Iitihāsāchin Sādhanen, ed. by V. K. Rājwadé and others.
Rāmaprasāda	...	Rāmaprasāda Sena's Granthāvalī.
Riyāz	...	Riyāz-us-salātin by Ghulām Husain Salim (English translation).
Salimullah	...	Tārikh-i-Bangālah by Salimullah.
Sarkar, *Fall*	...	Fall of the Mughal Empire by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Kt.
Scrafton, R. I.	...	Reflections on the Government of Indostan by Luke Scrafton.
S. P. D.	...	Selections from the Peshwā Daftar by G. S. Sardesai and others.
Siyar	...	Siyar-ul-mutakherin by Ghulām Husain.
Stavorinus	...	Voyage to the East Indies by Stavorinus.
Stewart	...	History of Bengal by Charles Stewart.
Taylor	...	A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Cotton Manufacture at Dacca by Taylor.
Typical Selections	...	Typical Selections from Old Bengali Literature by D. C. Sen.

Vansittart	...	**Narrative of the Transactions in Bengal by Henry Vansittart.**
Verelst	...	**A View of the Rise, Progress, and Present state of the English Government in Bengal by H. Verelst.**
Wafā	...	**Waqāi Fath Bangālah by Mubammad Wafā.**
Wilson	...	**The Early Annals of the English in Bengal by C. R. Wilson.**
Wilson's *Glossary*	...	**Glossary of Anglo-Indian Terms by Wilson.**
Yusuf	...	**Ahwāl-i-Aliwārdī Khān by Yusuf Ali.**

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ALIVARDI'S PORTRAIT

(From the original painting preserved in the palace of the Nawāb Bāhādur of Murshidābād)

CHAPTER I

Early Career of Alivardi

In the century and a half before Akbar, an 'Indian Muslim' people grew up as a result of the immigration, settlement, conquest, and conversion of the preceding few centuries. With the Mughals a fresh extra-Indian Turki element entered the land but very wisely identified its interests with those of the Rajput peoples and at first sought to exclude other external adventurers, and where that was not possible (as with the Uzbegs), to assimilate them to the Mughal-Rājput polity. But with the gradual change in Mughal policy from 1611 in the time of Jahangir, the Rājputs in the Mughal State were replaced by Iranian and Central or West Asiatic immigrant fortune-seekers, under state patronage. As the central authority gradually became more and more weak for various reasons, this new element could not be fully controlled and utilised for imperial or national purposes, and the growing independence and ambition of Muslim adventurers of foreign extraction sapped the foundations of the Mughal Empire. The history of India in the eighteenth century was considerably influenced by the rise of such adventurers to exalted positions like Subahdārships, Naib-Subahdārships, etc. Thus we have Asaf Jāh Nizām-ul-mulk in the Deccan, 1713 ; Saādat Ali in Oudh, 1723; and Saifuddaulah in the Punjab, 1713. In Bengal we find a striking example of this in the career of the Indianised Turko-Arab Alivardi, who like his predecessors, Murshid Quli Jāfar Khān and Shujāuddin, belonged to a family of adventurers.[1]

1 Side by side with Muslim Central and West Asiatic adventurers, Christian Armenians also rose into prominence in Bengal ; there we also find Mārwārī fortune-seekers like the founders of the Jagat Seth house and Sikh adventurers like Omichānd and Hāzārimal. Apart from Orientals, we have again a number of European military or commercial adventurers who become creative forces in the eighteenth century Indian history.

Alivardi's family history.

Alivardi Khān was originally known as Mirzā Bande[2] or Mirza Muhammad Ali.[3] His mother belonged to the Turki tribe of Afshar settled in Khorasan and was thus related to Shujāuddin Muhammad Khān, the son-in-law of Murshid Quli Jāfar Khān and the Deputy Governor of Orissā in his time.[4] His grandfather, an Arab by descent, was foster-brother of Emperor Aurangzeb[5] and was exalted in his time as a Mughal *mansbdār*,[6] and his father Mirzā Muhammad was at first employed as a cup-bearer[7] of Azam Shāh, second son of Aurangzeb.[8] A son was born to Mirzā Muhammad early in the reign of Aurangzeb and was named Mirzā Ahmad ;[9] Mirzā Muhammad Ali was born ten years later in one of the cities of the Deccan.[10] Due to the influence of their parents, Mirzā Muhammad Ali and his brother had easy and frequent access into the Imperial palace during their boyhood.[11] As the two brothers attained the adult age, Azam Shāh placed Mirzā Ahmad in charge of the *abdār-khānā* (pantry) at Delhi ; Mirzā Muhammad Ali was similarly appointed superintendent of the *filkhānās* (elephant-stables) and was also given the charge of the *zardozkhānā* (department of embroidered cloths).[12]

Troubles of Mirzā Muhammad Ali's family after the death of Azam Shāh.

In the sanguinary battle fought at Jajau near Agra in the month of June, 1707, between Bāhādur Shāh and Azam Shāh, Mirzā Muhammed Ali firmly stood by the side of Azam Shāh and received several arrow-wounds. But the death of their patron Azam Shāh

[2] Riyāz (English translation), p. 293 ; Imād, f. 26a. He received the title of Alivardi when Shujāuddin appointed him later on *faujdār* of Rājmahal.

[3] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 470 ; Stewart, p. 473.

[4] Yusuf Ali, f. 1 ; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 470 ; Khulāsat-ut-Tawārikh (Oriental Public Library, Bankipore).

[5] Imād, f. 26a.

[6] Yusuf Ali, f. 1.

[7] Riyāz, p. 293 ; Rāhat-ul-Arwāb, f. 83A.

[8] Siyār, Vol. II, p. 470 ; Yusuf, f. 1.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] *Ibid.*

in course of this battle and the consequent loss of employments involved the members of Mirzā Muhammad Ali's family in great troubles.[13] Being thus reduced to straits, Mirzā Muhammad with his wife went to the court of Shujāuddin Muhammad Khān at Cuttack in the hope of getting help and favour from the latter as he was related to his wife. Shujāuddin received him kindly and admitted him into his service.[14] Mirzā Ahmad left India for a few years on a pilgrimage to Mecca.[15] For his livelihood Mirzā Muhammad Ali joined the ranks of the *Wālāshāhi* (royal) troops, in the party of Amānat Khān [15a] and Samsam-ud-daulah ; this employment being, however, unsuited to his temperament, he soon gave it up and retired to private life.[16]

Mirzā Muhammad Ali proceeded to Bengal.

But even the darkest cloud has its silver lining. Mirzā Muhammad Ali's poverty and adversity now proved to be a blessing in disguise by schooling him for his future eminence. In response to a call from his father, who had found a hospitable shelter at Cuttack, he decided to try his luck in the Bengal Subah, which being till then comparatively free from political troubles, and also because of her natural facilities, had an attraction for adventurers from other parts of India. In 1720 A.D.[17] he proceeded to Bengal with his wife and daughters in a state of extreme penury.[18] On his arrival at Murshidābād, Murshid Quli Jāfar Khān, instead of receiving him kindly, tried to inflict some

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 470 ; Yusuf, f. 2.

[15] *Ibid.*

[15a] Amānat Khān was a native of Balkh and a son-in-law of Ināyatullah Khān Kāshmīrī, who was appointed Governor of Kāshmīr in 1717 A.D. (Irvine, Vol. I, p. 334). He was appointed governor of Gujrāt in Bāhādur Shāh's reign with the title of Shahāmat Khān. In 1713 he was confirmed in his old appointment and received the title of Mubariz Khān (Irvine, Vol. I, p. 262). He was killed in a battle against the Nizām-ul-mulk on the 11th October, 1724.

[16] Yusuf, f. 1.

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] *Ibid* ; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 470. Karam Ali writes (f. 8a) that Mirzā Muhammad Ali sold the ornaments of his wife for Rs. 900 in order to meet the expenses of his journey.

injury upon the adventurer.[19] He was, however, saved from it through the timely warnings given him by Murshid Quli's wife, who had a remote kinship with him.[20]

Mirzā Muhammad Ali's arrival at the court of Shujāuddin in Orissā.

From Murshidābād, Mirzā Muhammad Ali proceeded to Cuttack, where he was received by Shujāuddin with due honour,[21] and was immediately appointed to a post carrying a monthly salary of rupees one hundred. Being endowed with a keen intellect, a sound judgment, a capacity for duly discharging the most delicate affairs,[22] as well as great prowess and intrepid bravery,[23] he attracted the attention of Shujāuddin, who entrusted him with various other duties.[24] In recognition of his satisfactory and faithful services, he was soon appointed supervisor over the *faujdārs* of Orissā.[25] He also rendered his master a substantial help by reducing to submission some refractory zamindārs of Orissā, who had then rebelled against his government, and by effecting satisfactory arrangements for the administration of the villages belonging to them.[26] As a reward for these services, he was elevated to a higher rank.[27]

His success in Orissā

Mirzā Muhammad Ali's successes in Orissā encouraged him to invite his brother Mirzā Ahmad (called 'Hāji' Ahmad after his return from Mecca), then living in Delhi, to come to Orissā with the other members of his family.[28] He remitted a decent sum to his brother for his travelling expenses,[29] and the latter came to Bengal[30] in 1721[30a] with his mother, daughters, and three sons, Muhammad Rezā, Agā Muhammad Sayeed, and Mirzā Muhammad Hāshim.[31] Hāji

Hāji Ahmad also came to Orissā with his family.

19 Yusuf, f. 2.
20 *Ibid.* Probably through Shujāuddin.
21 *Ibid.*
22 *Ibid.*
23 Siyar, Vol. II. p. 470.
24 Yusuf, f. 2.
25 *Ibid*, f. 3.
26 *Ibid.*
27 *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 470.
28 *Ibid.*
29 Khulāsat-ut-Tawārikh.
30 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 470.
30a Muzaffarnāmah, f. 913.
31 Yusuf, f. 3; Muzaffarnāmah, f 9b.

Ahmad was at first appointed to a post carrying a monthly salary of Rs. 50 and his three sons Muhammad Reza, Muhammad Sayeed and Muhammad Hāshim were appointed on a monthly salary of Rs. 30, Rs. 20, and Rs. 10 respectively.[32] Orme writes that both Mirzā Muhammad Ali and his brother came with strong recommendations from Delhi which produced the desired effect on Shujāuddin's mind.[33] But none of the other contemporary writers refers to any such recommendation; nor does any one corroborate the statement of Mr. Holwell that Hāji Ahmad was at first appointed Shujāuddin s first '*Kistmutgār*' or 'khidmatgār' (valet), and Mirzā Muhammad Ali his '*chilampurdār*' ('chilam-bardār', keeper of the smoking pipe).[34] Only Salimullah, the author of *Tārikhi-Bangālah*, who is all along biased against Mirzā Muhammad Ali, writes of him and his brother acting as '*musāhebs*' (flatterers) of Shujāuddin.

Gradual rise of the two brothers – factors which helped it.

Being gifted with perseverence, tact and prudence,[35] the two brothers proved to be helpful agents in the administration of Shujāuddin. Due to their initiative the department of finance was effectively reformed and the revenue-collections of Orissā were increased to a degree.[36] In short, their industry, untiring efforts, and devoted services contributed largely towards making the government of their master "popular, respectable, and beneficial to the empire."[37] Orissā thus served as the practising ground in administrative affairs for Mirzā Muhammad Ali, the future *subahdār* of Bengal.

It would appear from the accounts of writers like Salimullah, Holwell, and Scrafton that the two brothers created and asserted

32 Yusuf, f. 3.
33 Indostan, Vol. II, p. 27.
34 I. H. E., Part I, p. 60.
35 Riyāz (Eng. trans.), p. 294; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 470.
36 *Ibid.*
37 Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 473.

their influence through some ignoble and unworthy tactics Salimullah observes that they employed their *begams* to humour Shujāuddin.[38] Holwell writes that Hāji Ahmad "soon found out the great foible of his master which was an ungovernable appetite for a variety of women (and) by indulging and feeding this passion, quickly gained an ascendant over his master, and had the disposal of all places, small or of importance; and as he was observed to be the growing favourite, all suits and petitions were preferred through his mediation."[39] Scrafton has gone a step further and has noted that Hāji Ahmad "made a sacrifice of his own daughter to his master's lust."[40] But these accounts are not worthy of credence. Salimullah does not always write about Alivardi as an impartial critic, while the writings of Holwell and Scrafton, being based on secondary sources, are full of inaccuracies. Their statements, especially those of Holwell,[41] cannot always be accepted as historical facts unless these are corroborated by other evidences. There is no doubt that Hāji Ahmad was cunning, tactful, and devoid of strict moral principles; but there are evidences neither reliable nor impartial enough to enable us to assert that he sacrificed the honour of numerous women, including those of his own family, for the furtherance of his own ambition, though it must be admitted that such conduct is not unknown in political history. According to Yusuf Ali and Ghulām Husain, the gradual elevation of Mirzā Muhammad Ali and his brother was the outcome of their loyal and skilful services to their patron in matters of administration only. These two writers are ordinarily more reliable as sources for this period; but it is known that certain facts about Alivardi and his family have either been passed over or polished by them, and they usually indulge in panegyrics—which is natural, for they received

38 Salimullah, f. 78A.
39 I. H. E., Part I, p. 61.
40 Reflections on the Government of Indostan.
41 Bengal : Past and Present, 1915, pp 78-79.

various benefits from him, directly or indirectly. Yet they are saner writers. On the other hand, while it is clear that Salimullah, Scrafton, and Holwell were merely building on current scandalous gossips, there must have been some basis of such current impression. Without accepting the details, we may say that Hāji Ahmad rose mostly by unscrupulously helping the tastes of his master, for in those days this was one of the sure ways of the rise of adventurers at courts; but Alivardi's rise was due to his meritorious services.

Accession of Shujā-uddin to the *masnad* of Bengal with the help of Mirzā Muhammad Ali and Hāji Ahmad.

Besides their satisfactory work in Orissā, the two brothers helped Shujāuddin considerably in securing the *masnad* of Bengal much against the desire of his father-in-law Murshid Quli Jāfar Khān. Murshid Quli had no son and Shujāuddin was therefore his prospective heir. But there was no love lost between the two. Shujāuddin's lascivious passion for women alienated even his wife Zebunnisā, who was a woman of virtuous disposition. She left his company and lived with her son Sarfarāz in her father's palace at Murshidābād.[42] Thus when Murshid Quli realised that his life was nearing its end, he tried to procure from the Delhi court the *nizāmat* of Bengal for Shujāuddin's son, Alāuddaulah Sarfarāz Khān. On hearing of this project, Shujāuddin consulted Mirzā Muhammad Ali and Hāji Ahmad, and with their advice and help sent envoys with magnificent presents to the Delhi Emperor, to his *Wazir* Qamruddin and to Khān-i-Daurān Samsam-ud-daulah, soliciting patents conferring upon him the *Diwāni* and *Nizāmat* of Bengal and Orissā. To get timely information about Murshid Quli Khān's demise, a *dāk* was posted on the road from Orissā to Murshidābād, while to procure the desired patents from the Emperor another *dāk* was posted on the road from Orissā to Delhi. Shujāuddin ostensibly dismissed some soldiers from service but in reality sent them to

[42] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 470.

Murshidābād to remain in readiness at different places round Murshid Quli's palace so that they could promptly execute some orders that might be sent to them. In view of the rainy season, boats of all sizes were kept ready for emergencies. On being informed through a reliable letter that Murshid Quli could not survive more than five or six days, he started from Cuttack towards Murshidābād with sufficient troops, a number of his friends, and Mirzā Muhammad Ali, leaving as his deputy at Cuttack his son Muhammad Taqi Khān, born of his wife other than Murshid Quli's daughter. On his way he heard of Mushid Quli's demise, and at the same time received the Imperial *sanad* for the Government of Bengal. After halting for a while at the place where these news reached him and naming it *Mubārakmanzil* or the auspicious stage, he proceeded hurriedly towards Murshidābād. Just after his arrival there, he repaired to the *Chihil Satun*, a building of forty pillars which had been erected under the orders of Murshid Quli,[43] and proclaimed his accession to the *masnad* of Bengal (July, 1727) before the principal officers and the inhabitants of the city. Sarfarāz Khān thought it useless to contest the *masnad* with his father, and soon submitted to him quietly.[44]

Thus established on the throne of Bengal, Shujāuddin proceeded to organise the government. He began by bestowing rewards and favours on the important members of Mirzā Muhammad Ali's family in recognition of his sound advice and meritorious services. Hāji Ahmad's eldest son Muhammad Rezā (later on known as Nawāzish Muhammad Khān) was appointed *bakhshi* of the Nawāb's troops[45] and Superintendent of Customs at Murshidābād;[46] his second son Agā Muhammad

Appointments and titles for Hāji Ahmad's relations.

[43] It was a building with a stone cupola leaning on forty columns of stone and open on all sides. On its site Sirājuddaulah built his palace.

[44] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 471; Yusuf, f. 4.

[45] *Ibid*, f. 4.

[46] Salimullah, f. 78A; Itiyāz, p. 294.

Sayeed (later on called Sayeed Ahmad Khān) was appointed *faujdār* of Rungpur;[47] and his youngest son Mirzā Muhammad Hāshim (later on called Zainuddin Ahmad Khān) was invested with the title of Hāshim Ali Khān.[48] It was at this time that Hāji Ahmad's half-sister Shāh Khānam was married to Mir Muhammad Jafar Khān, son of an Arab, named Sayyed Ahmad Najafi.[49]

Efficient administration of Alivardi as *faujdār* of Rājmahal.

Mirzā Muhammad Ali was appointed *faujdār* of the *chucklā*[50] of Akbarnagar (Rājmahal) in 1728[50a] and was invested with the title of Alivardi.[51] It was just in the fitness of things that the administration of Rājmahal, which held a strategic geographical position as the gate of Bengal, was entrusted to a man like Mirzā Muhammad Ali, who had already given sufficient proofs of his tact and ability. Shujāuddin's choice was amply justified. The people of Rājmahal enjoyed peace and prosperity under the efficient administration of their new *faujdār*.[52] Alivardi and his brother Hāji Ahmad soon became the principal

[47] *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 472. According to Yusuf Ali, Md. Sayeed was placed in charge of disbursing salaries to public servants and menials (*shāgirdpeshah*).

[48] Salimullah, f. 78A; Riyāz, p. 294.

[49] Yusuf, f. 4. Calendar of Persian Correspondence, Vol. IV, p. 317. She was sister of Mir Muhammad Amin Khān, a step-brother of Alivardi. Her son was Sādak Ali, and her daughter, Fatemā Begam, was married to Nawāb Mir Kāsim.

[50] *Chāklā*, an administrative division. Murshid Quli Jāfar Khān redistributed the *paraganās* into thirteen *chāklās* in place of the thirty-four *sarkārs* of Shāh Shujā's revenue settlement. Ascoli, *Early Revenue History of Bengal*, p. 25. Verelst, in the glossary prefixed to his 'A View of the Rise, etc.,' defines '*Chucklah*' (*Chāklā*) as "the jurisdiction of a *faujdār* who receives the rent from the zamindars."

[50a] Muzaffarnāmah, f. 12A.

[51] Yusuf, f. 4; Wafā, f. 5; Riyāz, p. 294: Rāhat-ul-Arwāh, f. 83B; Firminger, *Fifth Report*, Vol. II, p. 202. The Siyar (Vol. II, p. 472), and the Khulāsat-ut-Tawārikh, probably borrowing from it, wrongly write that Zainuddin was appointed *faujdār* of Akbarnagar.

[52] Wafā, f. 5. Muzaffarnāmah, f. 12A. It is stated in the Muzaffarnāmah that Alivardi's father died and was buried at Rājmahal. Hamilton Buchanan in his Bhāgalpur Journal writes of having seen the monument of Alivardi's father at a village called Mossha near Rājmahal. I could not trace it in spite of making a local enquiry.

advisers[53] of Shujāuddin in all affairs of the state.[54] The Nawāb placed so much reliance on Alivardi's advice that he summoned him once a year from Rājmahal to Murshidābād to help him in the transaction of the political and fiscal affairs of the *subah*.[55]

Fortune smiled upon Alivardi brightly after a change in the government of Bihār. Fakhr-ud-daulah, who succeeded Nasrat Yār Khān as the Governor of Bihār in 1727 A.D., held that post for about five years.[56] But he was uneducated, arrogant, proud, and self-indulgent, and could not, therefore, discharge his duties properly. He was foolish enough to quarrel with Shaikh Abdullah, a man of considerable influence in Bihār being employed by every Governor, either as his deputy or as the chief farmer of the revenues.[57] Further, he insulted Khawjah Mutāssam, who had been living a retired religious life at Azimābād (Patna). This was an unwise provocation, as the latter went to Delhi and reported it to his brother Samsam-ud-daulah Khān-i-Daurān, through whose influence Fakhr-ud-daulah[58] was dismissed. Bihār was then annexed to the Bengal Subah and automatically placed under Nawāb Shujāuddin. It remained since then an apanage of the Bengal government till 1912.

Bihār annexed to the Bengal Subah.

Shujāuddin did not think it advisable to keep the entire charge of Bihār and Bengal under himself, nor did he find any one among his kinsmen fit for being entrusted with the government of Bihār.[59] His proposal for the appointment of his son, Sarfarāz,

Alivardi as Deputy Governor of Bihār.

[53] His two other advisers were Rāyrāyān Alamchānd, who was formerly his *diwān* at Cuttack, and Jagat Seth Fatehchānd, the banker of Murshidābād.

[54] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 471; Yusuf, f. 4. [55] *Ibid*, f. 5.

[56] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 469. [57] *Ibid*.

[58] There is a mosque called after him 'Fakhr-ud-daulah's mosque' on the main road, about 6 miles east of Golā, in Patna City. It was built in 1788 A.D., perhaps by his wife, who is called Begam Sahebā in the inscription on the mosque, but her name is not mentioned. It was completely wrecked in the earthquake of January, 1934 and was rebuilt from its foundation in 1935 at the cost of the Nawāb Bāhādur of Murshidābād. The cupolas of the present structure retain the same chastity of design as those of the original building.

[59] Yusuf, f. 6.

as the Deputy Governor of Bihār was opposed by his consort Zebunnisā, who did not like to remain separated from her only son. She did not also support the appointment of Taqi Khān, half-brother of Sarfarāz.[60] Considering that the administration of Bihār required a strong man at the helm of its affairs, Shujāuddin turned his choice upon Alivardi. This was supported by all the members of his Council[61] and also by Zebunnisā. She summoned Alivardi before the gate of the female apartment, had a rich *khelāt* (dress) put on his body through her son Sarfarāz,[62] and gave him a *firmān* for the Government of Bihār.[63] After this investiture Alivardi was called before Shujāuddin, who also on his own part gave him an elephant, a sword, a dagger, an embroidered head-dress along with other presents, and the patent for the Deputy Governorship of Bihār.[64]

Birth of Mirzā Muhammad (Sirāj-ud-daulah).

A few days before Alivardi received this new appointment, his youngest daughter Aminā Begum, married to his youngest nephew Zainuddin Ahmad Khān, had given birth to a son. Alivardi had no son of his own ; he named his grandson Mirzā Muhammad (later on known as Nawāb Siraj-ud-daulah), adopted him as his successor, and made him an object of special favour and affection, as his birth was synchronous with his elevation to that high post.[65] Having obtained permission to take with him his two sons-in-law, his newly born grandson, and several other relatives,[66] Alivardi started for Azimābād

[60] *Ibid* ; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 472.

[61] *Ibid.*

[62] Khulāsat-ut-Tawārikh.

[63] Yusuf, f. 6. This shows the influence of Zebunnisā in Shujāuddin's government. Instances of women taking part in administration were not rare in the history of India in the past as well as during this period. *Vide* Chapter IX.

[64] Yusuf, f. 7 ; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 472.

[65] *Ibid.*

[66] *Ibid* ; Khulāsat-ut-Tawārikh.

(Patna) in 1733 [67] with five thousand soldiers in infantry and cavalry. [68] After his stay there for full one year, [69] he was summoned to Murshidābād by Shujāuddin, who had then procured for him, from the Imperial Court at Delhi, the title of Mahābat Jang, the rank of a *panchhāzārī mansabdār*, and the honour of possessing a fringed palki (palanquin), a standard, and a kettledrum. [70] Those honours being duly bestowed upon him, he came back to Azimābād as soon as possible. [71]

Bihār administration not an easy task.

Bihār administration was not a very easy task at that time, especially because the weak government of Fakhr-ud-daulah had given rise to various disorders. The whole province was in a greatly distracted and unsettled state. Most of the Zamindārs had become turbulent and rebellious, [72] and the land had fallen a prey to the nefarious activities of a band of wandering people called the *Banjārās*, "who in the guise of traders and travellers used to plunder the Imperial domains and treasures." [73] But nothing daunted by these manifold odds, Alivardi plied himself to his duties with great vigour and courage. He first of all tried to restore order in the city of Patna, to create confidence in

Chastisement of the Banjārās.

[67] Yusuf, f. 6. Writers like Orme (Indostan, Vol. II, p. 28), Holwell (I. H. E., pp. 68-71) and Stewart (History of Bengal, pp. 477-79) wrongly think that Alivardi began his governorship of Bihār from 1729 A.D.

[68] Riyāz, p. 295.

[69] Yusuf, f. 7; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 473.

[70] *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 7; Wafā, f. 5; Khulāṣat-ut-Tawārikh. Salimulah, who believes that Alivardi had been aspiring after the *masnad* of Bengal for a long time wrongly holds that he directly secured the title from Delhi without Shujāuddin's permission. The author of Riyāz, depending evidently on Salimullah, has repeated his mistake and writes that through the agency of Muhammad Isahaq Khān, *Diwān* of the Imperial *khālsā*, Alivardi opened negotiations which Qamruddin Khān, the Imperial *Wazir*, and also with other Imperial ministers, and succeeded in obtaining directly from the Emperor the title of Mahābat Jang Bāhādur without Shujāuddin's recommendation (p. 297).

[71] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 473; Yusuf, f. 7.

[72] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 473.

[73] Riyāz, p. 296; Rāhat-ul-Arwāh, f. 84a. According to Crooke (*Tribes and Castes of N. W. P and Oudh*, Vol. I, p. 179) the term Banjārā is derived from the Sanskrit Vānijya-Kāra (a merchant). Peter Mundy (*Travels*, Vol. II, pp. 95-96) and Tavernier (*Travels*, Vol. I,

the hearts of his subjects, and to secure the attachment of the army. [74] He next tried his best to strengthen the military establishment of his government by recruiting as many soldiers as were available from the adjacent territories, and thus within a short time he could gather a well-trained and powerful army. [75] He admitted into his service Abdul Karim Khān, a powerful Ruhelā Afghān chief having fifteen hundred Dīrbhangā Afghāns under his command. [76] With the help of these Afghāns, Alivardi chastised the turbulent Banjārās and got an immense booty from them. [77]

Refractory nobility brought under control.

A refractory nobility is a source of danger to a state. Alivardi thus acted wisely in trying, from the commencement of his administration of Bihār, to suppress the unruly Zemindārs of the province. He weakened some of them by fomenting dissensions among them, [78] while a few others sought and secured his favour by readily submitting to him. [79] But strong measures had to be adopted to bring the more uncontrollable ones under effective control. The Bhojpurī Zamindārs of Shāhābād, Rājah Sundar Singh of Tikāri, and Kāmgār Khān

p. 30) describe the Banjārās as a nomadic tribe of public carriers continually wandering from place to place with their women, children, household goods, and animals like oxen. Some of them were again independent traders and transported goods from one market to another. In the eighteenth century, probably due to the disorders of the time, they took to plundering activities as opportunities came. They were occasionally employed to supply provisions to soldiers in the field; as for example, in Sikandar Lodi's campaign against Gwālior in 1505 A.D. (Elliot, Vol. V, p. 100) and in Lord Cornwallis' war with Tipu in 1791 A.D. (Mill's *British India*, Vol. V, Chapter IV). Malcolm writes (*Memoir of Central India*, Vol. II, p. 152) of them :—" They live in tents ..... they come and go to different countries; their services are required to supply armies and to carry on commerce. Their number in any one province rises and falls like an article in trade, according to the demand."

[74] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 473.

[75] *Ibid.*

[76] *Ibid*; Riyāz, p 296; Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 478.

[77] *Ibid.*

[78] Siyar, Vol II, p. 473.

[79] *Ibid.*

Mayi of Narhaṭ-Samāi, [80] who had defied the authority of the previous Deputy Governors and had evaded the payment of the government dues, were reduced to submission and compelled to pay all the arrear revenues due from them. [81] The Rājahs of Beṭṭiah and Bhānwārah [82] were also thoroughly subdued, and from their territories Alivardi carried off a large booty worth several lacs, in specie and other effects. [83]

Suppression of the Chākwārs.

Alivardi then turned his attention against the Chākwārs, a brave and powerful Hindu tribe who had their stronghold at Sambho in the Begusarāi subdivision of the Monghyr district. They had made themselves semi-independent, and had defied the authority of the *subahdārs* of Bengal and of the Delhi Emperors by withholding the payment of tribute to the Government, at least since the early 18th century if not earlier. [84] They "laid everything that passed on the river (Ganges) by Mongheer (Monghyr) under contribution, and put the European settlements to an annual heavy expense of a large armament to escort their trade to and from Patna." [85] Their 'old and brave' Rājah died in the year 1730, and was succeeded by his son, a youth of seventeen, who being intimidated by the examples of several of the Bihār Zemindārs submitted to Alivardi after a short resistance and acknowledged allegiance to the Delhi

[80] This Zamindāri covered the south-east of Zilā Bihār. An area of 10½ square miles of the Narhaṭ paraganā now lies in the south-east of the Bihār subdivision of the Patna district, while the rest of it, and the whole of the Samāi *paraganā*, lie in the Nawādā subdivision of Gayā district. *Vide* Buchanan, Patna-Gaya Report, Vol. II, pp. 588-89. For an account of the Mayi family, *vide* Buchanan, *op. cit.*, pp. 56, 96, 176, 181, 219, 269, 584, 590, 591.

[81] Riyāz, p. 297.

[82] It has been mentioned as a *mahāl* under *sarkār* Tirhut in *subah* Bihār in Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. II, p. 156; Stewart (p. 478) wrongly calls it Phoolareh. Phulwārī was a *mahāl* under *sarkār* Bihār.

[83] Riyāz, p. 296.

[84] Fort William Consultations, 1718-1722 A.D., Wilson, Vol. III, pp. 50, 153, 246, 255, 275, 283, 325, 353.

[85] Holwell, I H. E., pp. 68-70.

Emperor and the *subahdār* of Bengal. An annual tribute was stipulated, and was regularly paid for four years. A spot was fixed at a distance of thirty miles from the capital of the Chākwārs, where their Rājah every year met an officer of the Bengal Government on a certain day to pay the promised tribute, each party coming with only thirty attendants.[86]

In the meanwhile, Abdul Karim, the brave Afghān commander of Alivardi, conscious of his own prowess, grew rather insolent and manifested a spirit of independence that spurned at authority. Apprehending that the example of the Afghān commander might breed infection among others to the prejudice of his government, Alivardi got him murdered through a clever device when he attended the *chihil satun* or Hall of Audience at Patna.[87] Ghulām Husain, with his usual partiality for Alivardi, has tried to defend this conduct on his part. He believes that Abdul Karim deserved an exemplary capital punishment for his refractoriness and defiance of the authority.[88] But the treacherous assassination of a person, who had rendered useful services so lately, simply on the charge of insubordination, seems to be a disproportionate punishment. It was too clearly an act of ambition which would brook no opposition. Alivardi's officers and courtiers must have recalled the incident when in the year 1748 his nephew Haibat Jang was murdered by the Afghāns in the same hall.[88a]

Murder of Abdul Karim.

However, by following a strict policy of repression, sometimes coupled with conciliation, Alivardi succeeded in restoring administrative order in Bihār. We have it on the authority of

[86] *Ibid.* The late Rai Saheb Rāshdhari Singh of Chitror in Begusarāi subdivision of the Monghyr district claimed descent from the Chākwārs and saw me once with a view to know their history.

[87] Riyāz, p. 297; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 473.

[88] *Ibid.*

[88a] *Vide* Chapter IV.

contemporary writers like Yusuf Ali,[89] Ghulām Husain [90] and Wafā,[91] and also of a comparatively late writer, Kalyān Singh, that he governed the province in an efficient and excellent manner. The coercion of the Zemindārs compelled him no doubt to take recourse to rather barsh measures but he was not cruel to the common people. As a matter of fact, the evils due to aristocratic turbulence, during the wrecked administration of his predecessor, had grown too alarming for the interests of the province to be cured by mere "rose-water surgery." It should be noted to the credit of Alivardi that he could effect a considerable improvement in the financial condition of his government not by imposing additional taxes but by properly collecting the old ones and by recovering the arrear revenues from the Zamindārs. This enabled him to remit to the Delhi Emperor thirty lacs of rupees a year as revenue from the Bihār *subah* instead of twenty lacs, as sent in the time of Farrukhsiyar.[92] Thus Alivardi's vigorous administration of Bihār marked a turning point in his career, because it provided him with means both to conserve Shujāuddin's goodwill and esteem and to strengthen his own position.[93]

An estimate of Alivardi's administration of Bihār.

[89] f. 7.

[90] Siyar, Vol. II, p 273.

[91] f. 6.

[92] C. R., 1882, p. 113. While these facts indicate increased efficiency of revenue-collection, the great increase in the Delhi tribute can only be regarded as a sacrifice of government finance for the sake of securing freedom from Delhi interference with growing provincial independence, and as a considerable economic drain on Bengal, which had no return.

[93] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 273.

CHAPTER II

Rise of Alivardi to Subahdarship and Consolidation of His Power

Death of Shujā-uddin and accession of Sarfarāz.

Shujāuddin breathed his last on the 13th of March, 1739, and his son Sarfarāz, entitled Alā-ud-daulah Haider Jang, peacefully ascended the *masnad* of Bengal. The new *subahdār* retained in his government old officers like Hāji Ahmad, the chief *diwān*, *rāyrāyān* Ālamchānd, *diwān* of the *Khālsā*, and others. But he was personally incapable of holding the reins of government. Devoid of sound administrative genius,[1] he could not manage properly the affairs of the state. To make matters worse, he indulged in excessive debauchery[2] under the cloak of devotion to the external formalities of religion, and thus wasted his time either in the company of idle priests or in his *harem* full of 1,500 women.[3] Excessive addiction to the pleasures of the *harem* impaired Sarfarāz's energies, and he could not develop intelligence, strength of character, and manly spirit, without which no ruler can ever pilot the ship of the state. His

Sarfarāz's lack of administrative genius and moral character.

[1] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 489; Yusuf, f. 8 (Yusuf Ali remained constantly with Sarfarāz during about one year of his rule); Wafā, fs. 6-7.

[2] Riyāz, p. 288; Holwell, I. H. E., pp. 75-77; Orme, *Indostan*, Vol. II, p. 29.

[3] Stewart, p. 493. Stewart's account of his *harem* of 1,500 women of various descriptions is apparently based on that of Salimullah. Neither Yusuf Ali nor Ghulām Husain writes anything directly about Sarfarāz's dissipation, though they have distinctly mentioned his incapacity for good government. It is true that they quote a letter from Alivardi charging Sarfarāz with a loose character (*vide infra*); but the absence of a full treatment of Sarfarāz's private life cannot readily be accounted for. Both of these writers seem to have been rather partial towards Alivardi, and as such it would have been natural for them to point out the demerits of Sarfarāz whom Alivardi supplanted; perhaps their view was that political capacity is independent of private morals or failings.

dissipation and weakness marred the efficiency of his administration, and also excited the ambition of those, who had been the ablest and the most faithful officers during his father's administration, to usurp power at his cost. As a matter of fact, his goverment fell a victim to the disintegrating forces of ambition and treachery in course of a year and a month.

Vicissitudes of fortune in the Delhi Empire also afforded a fair opportunity to the ambitious officers of the Bengal government to try for the fulfilment of their designs. Both Alivardi, who possessed a keen insight, and his brother Hāji Ahmad, who was extremely cunning, realised that the time was a most opportune one for self-aggrandisement, as their pretensions could not be checked by the sluggish Delhi Emperor, who had been rendered almost helpless by Nādir Shāh's invasion.[4] Rāyrāyān Ālamchānd and Fatechānd Jagat Seth, the famous banker of Murshidābād, both of whom had been perfectly devoted to Shujāuddin, had also ceased to entertain any regard for his son, though he had not wronged them in any way.[5] Since the beginning of his administration, they had joined in a plot with Hāji Ahmad to summon Alivardi from Patna, under the pretext of paying a visit to Sarfarāz, and then to install him on the *masnad* of Bengal by removing him (Sarfarāz) therefrom.[6] The 'Triumvirate' first tried to discredit Sarfarāz before the Emperor of Delhi. During the sack of Delhi by Nādir Shāh, they persuaded the simple-minded Nawāb of Bengal to strike coins and to read the *Khutba* in Bengal in the name of the Persian invader.[7] At the same time they remitted to Delhi the confiscated wealth of Shujāuddin and the tribute of Bengal through Murid Khān, who had been sent to Murshidābād, long

Conspiracy of Alivardi, Hāji Ahmad, Ālamchānd and Fatehchānd against Sarfarāz.

[4] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 389.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] Riyāz, p. 308; Salimullah, f. 93B. Stewart, who has given a similar account, has most probably borrowed it from Salimullah.

[7] Riyāz, p. 308.

before Nādir's invasion, by Qamruddin Khān, the *Wazir* of Emperor Muhammad Shāh.[8] They thus succeeded in exasperating the Delhi officers against Sarfarāz and winning them over to their side. With a view to reduce the strength of Sarfarāz they persuaded him to disband about half[9] of his troops on the plea of economy,[10] so that only three or four thousand cavalry remained in his army.[11] The cashiered soldiers were forthwith enlisted by Hāzi Ahmad in the army of Alivardi and sent off to Patna. He also sent to his brother his own and his son's hoarded wealth, amounting to four lacs of rupees, to meet the cost of maintaining the army.[12]

Estrangement between Sarfarāz and Hāji Ahmad partly due to the influence of some advisers of the former.

The influence of a set of advisers of Sarfarāz, such as Hāji Lutf Ali, Mir Murtazā, Mardan Ali Khān (paymaster of the late Nawāb Shujāuddin), and others, was partly responsible for the growing estrangement between him and the party of Hāji Ahmad. He had reposed his confidence in them since the commencement of his administration, and they now took advantage of this to 'feed fat their ancient grudge' against Hāji Ahmad.[13] They poisoned the Nawāb's mind against Hāji Ahmad by constantly dinning into his ears many unfavourable reports about him (Hāji Ahmad).[14] The Nawāb thereupon divested Hāji Ahmad of the office of the *diwān* and bestowed it on Mir Murtazā. He also contemplated transferring the *faujdāri* of Rājmahal from Atāullah Khān, son-in-law of Hāji Ahmad, to Mir Murtazā's son-in-law, Husain Muhammad Khān. Further, when Sayeed Ahmad and Zainuddin Ahmad, sons of Hāji Ahmad, came from Rangpur and Patna respectively to seek interviews with the Nawāb, the latter did not grant these. On the other

8 *Ibid.*
9 *Ibid.*
10 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 489.
11 Yusuf, f. 10.
12 Riyāz, p. 310.
13 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 489; Yusuf, fs. 9-11.
14 *Ibid.*

hand, acting according to the advice of Manuchar Khān and others, who bore hostile designs against Hāji Ahmad, he put them under confinement.[15] It would have been prudent for the Nawāb to pursue a consistent course of policy towards Hāji Ahmad and his followers, but it was not possible for him to do so. As is natural with all dissipated persons, he lacked strength of mind, and, probably from extreme nervousness, disclosed everything to Hāji Ahmad hoping to regain the old officer's confidence. It was a tactical blunder on his part. Hāji Ahmad was shrewd enough to judge the situation, and he lost no time to report all that had happened to his brother at Patna. As a matter of fact, he often sent to him exaggerated and distorted reports from Murshidābād with a view to fan the flames of his ambition and hostility against Sarfarāz.[16] Thus Hāji Ahmad indulged in this despicable game of villainy against his master in the garb of friendship.[17] Wafā, a panegyrist of Alivardi, wrongly writes that he (Hāji Ahmad) remained sincerely devoted to the government of Sarfarāz in spite of being treated by him in an unbecoming manner on more occasions than one.[18]

Alivardi's attempt to safeguard his position at Patna.

Alivardi was not slow to realise that a rupture with Sarfarāz was inevitable, and so he thought it necessary to safeguard his own position at Patna by obtaining a legal sanction for it from the Delhi court. With this view he wrote to Jugole Kishore, who was his as well as Nawāb Sarfarāz's *vakil* at the Imperial court, that if he was confirmed in the government of Bihār, then being comparatively safe and free he would turn his attention to remove the disorders at Murshidābād.[19] But there was no love lost between Alivardi and Jugole Kishore, who sent the letter to Sarfarāz Khān.[20] Being thus convinced of Alivardi's infidelity, Sarfarāz became highly incensed with him and Hāji Ahmad.

15 *Ibid.*
16 *Ibid.*
17 *Ibid.*
18 f. 8*a*.
19 Yusuf, f. 10.
20 *Ibid*, f. 11.

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He then affronted Hāji Ahmad by trying to break the marriage contract between Atāullah Khān's daughter, that is, Hāji Ahmad's grand-daughter, and Mirzā Muhammad (Sirāj-ud-daulah), son of Zainuddin, in order to get the young bride married to his own son. Further, he started a prompt enquiry into the revenue accounts of Bihār and recalled the troops that had been attached to Alivardi since the time of Shujāuddin. Those soldiers, who hesitated to come back, were deprived of all the grants and privileges that they had been enjoying since the beginning of Shujāuddin's *subahdārship*. All these were fully reported by Hāji Ahmad to his brother at Patna and his son Sayeed Ahmad Khān corroborated his accounts.[21]

Sarfarāz convinced of his infidelity.

Yusuf Ali writes of his having personally heard from Alivardi that he did not himself intend to oppose Sarfarāz but that he had been goaded to do so by his brother Hāji Ahmad and his nephew Sayeed Ahmad.[22] But this is a partial statement, pure and simple, and is not borne out in the least by the subsequent conduct of Alivardi. The instigation of Hāji Ahmad, no doubt, exercised a considerable influence on his brother; but it would be incorrect to regard the latter as an innocent tool in the hands of the former. It cannot be gainsaid that Alivardi's ambition was a big factor in the whole transaction. He definitely aspired after the *subahdārship* of Bengal, to secure which he now devised various plans with considerable skill and caution.[23] He had an old friend at the Imperial Court named Muhammad Ishaq Khān, surnamed Mutāman-ud-daulah, who then enjoyed the greatest confidence and favour of the Emperor Muhammad Shāh.[24] He wrote a private letter to him with a view to obtain a *sanad* granting him the government of Bengal, Bihār and Orissā, for which he promised to send to

Alivardi's ambition for the *masnad* of Bengal.

Alivardi's precautions before marching towards Bengal.

21 *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 489.
22 f. 12.
23 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 489.
24 *Ibid*.

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the Imperial Exchequer a present of one crore of rupees over and above the usual annual tribute, amounting to one crore, and as much of the wealth of Sarfarāz as he could confiscate.[25] He also requested him through another letter for an Imperial order directing him to fight with Sarfarāz Khān for the *masnad* of Bengal. To hold himself in readiness to take advantage of the earliest opportunity to promote this object, he mustered his troops on the pretext of marching against the notorious and refractory Zamindārs of Bhojpur. By the middle of March, 1740, he obtained the order, asked for, from the Delhi court permitting him to wrest the Government of Bengal from Sarfarāz.[26] He then got the time to start for Bengal fixed by a reliable and famous astrologer, and secretly sent a letter to his friend Jagat Seth Fatehchānd at Murshidābād communicating his intention to seize the government of Bengal.[27]

Alivardi left Patna towards the end of March, 1740,[28] on the plea of proceeding to Bhojpur and first encamped near *Waris Khān's* tank close to Patna.[29] He left Zainuddin as his lieutenant at Patna and sent Sayyid Hedāyat Ali Khān, father of the historian Ghulām Husain, to govern the *paraganās* of Seres and Cotombah.[30] Two days after Hedāyat Ali's departure from Patna, he communicated to him his determination to proceed to Murshidābād, asked him to live on good terms with Zainuddin, and to act as situation required. With a view to test the fidelity of his troops to him before starting for Murshidābād, he summoned an assembly of the principal Hindu and Muslim generals of his army,[31] such as Mustafā Khān, Shamshir Khān, Sardār Khān, Umar Khān,

Alivardi marched out of Patna.

[25] *Ibid.*
[26] *Ibid*, p. 490.
[27] *Ibid.*
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] *Ibid.*
[30] Two paraganās in South Bihār (*vide* Rennell's *Bengal Atlas*, Sheet No. III).
[31] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 490.

Rahim Khān, Sarandāz Khān, Shaikh Māsum, Shaikh Jahangir Khān, Zulfiqār Khān, Chedan Hāzāri, Bakhtwār Singh, and others.[32] He brought before them two men, one a pious Muhammadan with a copy of the sacred Korān in his hand and the other a Brāhman holding a vessel of Ganges-water in his right hand and a twig of *tulasī* (a sacred plant) in his left. With these, he addressed all in a solemn manner asking the Muhammadans to take an oath by touching the Korān that they would remain faithful to him and the Hindus to do the same by touching Ganges-water and the *tulasī* twig. His generals, both Hindu and Muhammadan, responded to his address by taking oaths in their respective forms. He then disclosed his intention of marching against Sarfarāz, which startled some of them, who could not, however, change their decision as they had already bound themselves by oath. The assembly was dissolved with the approach of night.[33]

Early the next dawn, Alivardi moved to Jāfar Khān's garden,[34] to the east of Patna city, and set out on his march towards Murshidābād with 7,000 or 8,000 cavalry,[35] a large body of experienced infantry, and a powerful artillery.[36] After a forced march he arrived close to the border of Bengal[37] near Colgong (on the East Indian Railway Loop Line), where nature had provided defences against sudden external attacks on Bengal. There were, on the one side, the almost inaccessible cliffs of the Rājmahal range, stretching southwards for about 80 miles to the Sāntal Paraganās and Birbhum. On the other, flowed the mighty Ganges, taking

How he crossed the Rājmahal hills.

[32] Riyāz, p. 311.

[33] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 490.

[34] We find a description of Jāfar Khān's garden in Buchanan's Patna and Gaya Journal, 1811-12, edited by V. H. Jackson. Buchanan came to Jāfar Khān's garden on the 3rd November, 1811.

[35] Yusuf, f. 12.

[36] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 490.

[37] *Ibid.*

a southward course below Sakrigali (six miles east of Sāhebganj station on the E. I. Ry. Loop Line), and the high road to Bengal running along its western bank.[38] From Colgong the route lay through a defile with the passes of Shāhābād[39] and Teliāgarhi, situated at a distance of three and a half miles from each other, and these passes were considered to be the gateways of Bengal. Completely blocking the mouth of this defile, that is, extending from the foot of the hills to the Ganges,[40] stood the fortress of Teliāgarhi,[41] whose ruins are still visible at a distance of seven miles west of Sāhebganj.[41a] Because of the strategic importance of the place, which was indeed 'the Gallipoli of Bengal' in those days, a garrison was always placed in the fortress, and no one could pass through it without obtaining a passport from the Nawāb of Bengal. To march into the plains of Bengal was not, therefore, a very easy task.

But Alivardi was not a man to be deterred from his purpose under any circumstances. So, with his usual ingenuity he resorted to a stratagem to get over the obstacle. Keeping himself concealed with the major portion of his army in a neighbouring valley, he sent ahead his trusted general Mustafā Khān with 100 cavalry to gain access into the fortress by showing to the garrison a passport from Nawāb Sarfarāz, which though originally meant for some one else had been intercepted by him (Alivardi). It was arranged that Mustafā Khān should bring the garrison at the fortress, composed of 200 musketeers, under control, and then make a signal by beat of drum for the rest of Alivardi's

[38] Rennell, *Description of Roads in Bengal and Bihar*, pp. 55-56.

[39] *Ibid.* Rennell, *Bengal Atlas*, Sheet No. 2 ; Buchanan, *Bhagalpur Journal*, J.B.O.R.S., Sept-Dec., 1929, p. 415. Not the pass of Sakrigali.

[40] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 490 ; Ives' Voyage, p. 161.

[41] For antiquity of the Teliāgarhi fortress, *vide* Neāmutullah's *Makhzan-i-Afaghānā* (Dorn's translation), Vol. II, p. 116; *Diary of John Marshall, May, 1671* (John Marshall in India, Oxford, 1927, p. 818) ; Tieffenthaler, Vol. II, p. 400 n. For later descriptions, *vide* Hodges, *Travels in India* (London, 1783), p. 22 ; Buchanan, *Bhagalpur Journal* (J.B.O.R.S., Sept-Dec., 1929, p. 415) : *Calcutta Review*, 1893, pp. 66-70.

[41a] *Vide* Appendix A.

army to advance. Mustafā Khān succeeded in having everything in his own way whereupon Alivardi appeared before the fortress with all his troops and compelled the garrison to surrender. He then advanced without any further opposition and entered within the jurisdiction of the *chucklā* (*chāklā*) of Akbarnagar (Rājmahal).[42] Sarfarāz remained till then quite ignorant of Alivardi's movements, as, acting under the instructions of Hāji Ahmad, his son-in-law Atāullah Khān, *faujdār* of Rājmahal, had stopped all means of communications to Bengal through the Rājmahal hills till Alivardi had passed beyond these.[43]

Sarfarāz remained ignorant of his movements.

Alivardi's letter to Jagat Seth Fatehchānd was now delivered to him by the former's agent according to his instructions. The banker calculated on perusing the contents of the letter that his friend must have passed beyond Teliāgarhi by that time and would reach Murshidābād within four or five days, and that his position would not be jeopardised in any way if his intention was then disclosed to Sarfarāz.[44] So with pretended uneasiness and fear he handed over his letter to Sarfarāz along with another from Alivardi to the Nawāb himself.[45] To justify his own conduct and to secure the safety of Hāji Ahmad and his relatives before openly defying Sarfarāz, Alivardi wrote the following to the Nawāb: "Since, after the many affronts heaped upon my brother, Hāji Ahmad, attempts have been made upon the honour and chastity of our family, your servant, in order to save

Alivardi's letter to Sarfarāz from Rājmahal.

[42] Yusuf, f. 12. Holwell (*op. cit.*, pp. 89-94) writes that when Alivardi reached south of Sakrigali, his generals demanded their arrear pay and also four months' pay in advance and a gratuity of three lacs of rupees, which he had promised to pay them just on entering Bengal. But he was relieved from the unfavourable situation by certain tricks of Omichānd, who had accompanied him there. Omichānd and his brother Deepchānd were rich merchants and bankers of Patna at that time. Incidentally it should be remembered that Patna had a Sikh colony from the close of the 17th century onwards, and it has survived all along.

[43] Riyāz, p. 311; Salimullah, f. 95.

[44] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 491.

[45] *Ibid*

that family from further disgrace, has been obliged to come so far, but with no other sentiments than those of fidelity and submission. Your servant hopes, therefore, that Hāji Ahmad should be permitted to come to him with his family and dependants.''[46]

Sarfarāz struck with surprise.

Alivardi's letter came to Sarfarāz as a great surprise. He was at his wit's end to make out what should be done with Hāji Ahmad. He immediately put him under confinement.[47] But that did not solve the problem. So, with a view to ascertaining his duty, he summoned a general assembly of his officers to sound their opinion.[48] Hāji Ahmad was called before the assembly and was reprimanded, but he pleaded that immediately on reaching Alivardi's camp he would persuade him to return to Patna.[49] The officers of Sarfarāz were at first divided in their opinions. Muhāmmad Ghaus Khān, a brave and experienced general sincerely devoted to the Nawābs Shujāuddin and Sarfarāz Khān, expressed the opinion that it would be of no avail to confine Hāji Ahmad, because that would not stop Alivardi's movements, and that his presence near his brother would add but little to his strength.[50] This opinion was accepted by others,[51] including Âlamchānd and Jagat Seth Fatehchānd,[52] who being traitors at heart thus indirectly helped the motives of Hāji Ahmad and Alivardi.[53] Hāji Ahmad was then permitted to proceed to his brother's camp with his family and followers.

Hāji Ahmad was permitted to proceed to his brother.

The chivalrous opinion of Ghaus Khān was practically unsound. Sarfarāz committed a blunder in permitting Hāji Ahmad to meet his brother. Hāji Ahmad was shrewd enough not to expose himself or his brother till he had joined him. He knew how to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. Thus in course

[46] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 497, Yusuf, f. 13.
[47] Salimullah, f. 95B; Kiyāz, p. 311.
[48] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 491.
[49] *Ibid.* [50] *Ibid.* [51] *Ibid.*
[52] Muzaffarnāmah, f. 28a.
[53] Scrafton, R. I., p. 37; Holwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-89.

of his journey he tried to hoodwink the Nawāb by writing to him that Alivardi was as faithful as ever, and that the Nawāb should not march against his servant but should grant him an interview so that he might get an opportunity to explain his position. He also hinted that if the Nawāb, in spite of his request and counsel, proceeded agaist Alivardi at the instigation of interested people, then Alivardi might be goaded in despair and self-defence to take such steps as would bring shame upon him both in this world and in the next.[54]

These false assurances of Hāji Ahmad could not deceive Sarfarāz and his officers. After a good deal of deliberation they thought it necessary to chastise Alivardi.[55] Sarfarāz now shook off his lethargy. At the instigation of Mardan Ali Khān (Paymaster of the late Nawāb Shujā-uddin's army), who was a bitter enemy of Hāji Ahmad, he personally proceeded against Alivardi on Wednesday, the 6th April, 1740,[56] at the head of 4,000 cavalry and a large infantry, leaving his son Hafizullah, surnamed Mirzā Amāni, together with the *faujdār* Yāsin Khān, in charge of the city of Murshidābād.[57] The prominent generals of the Nawāb's army were Ghaznafar Husain Khān and a son of Muhammad Taqi Khān (both of whom were his sons-in-law), Mir Muhammad Baqir Khān, Mirzā Muhammad Iraj Khān, Mir Kamāl, Mir Gadāi, Mir Hāidār Shāh, Mir Dilir Shāh, Baji (? Bijay) Singh, Rājah Gandharba Singh, Shamshir Khān Qureshi (*faujdār* of Silhet), Shujā Quli Khān (*faujdār* of Hugli), Mir Habib, Mardan Ali Khān, and others.[58]

Sarfarāz Khān proceeded against Alivardi.

His arrival at Bāhmaniah.

Marching north of Murshidābād, by what is now called the Jiāgañj-Jaṅgīpur road, Sarfarāz reached

54 Yusuf, fs. 13-14; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 491.
55 *Ibid.*
56 Yusuf, f. 14.
57 Riyāz, p 311.
58 *Ibid.*

Bāhmaniah[59] on the first day ; on the second day he advanced up to Sarāi Dewān (Dewānsarāi),[60] and on the third day he encamped at Komrah (Komrah),[61] where he mustered his army to review its strength.[62] He found that some of his old but treacherous officers, who had been in league with Hāji Ahmad, had kept brick-bats instead of shells in the arsenal and rubbish inside the guns.[63] So after dismissing Shahriyār Khān, a relative of Hāji Ahmad, from the post of Superintendent of the artillery, the Nawāb appointed in his place Pāñcho, son of a Portuguese physician named Antony.[64]

and at Komrah.

The Nawāb halted at Komrah for some time in order to hear the reports from envoys, one, a eunuch, named Sunnat,[65] and the other, named Shujā Quli Khān, *faujdār* of Hugli, both of whom had been sent by him to Alivardi to ascertain his object. The envoys returned from Alivardi's camp, with his emissary Hakim (a physician) Muhammad Ali Khān, completely hoodwinked, and communicated to Sarfarāz that Alivardi was still his faithful servant, who, in recognition of his indebtedness to the Nawāb's family, had nothing but the welfare of his government at heart. They further informed him that he had but two favours to ask of the Nawāb, the first being the grant of seven lacs of rupees to clear off the arrear pay of the soldiers, appointed according to the orders of the late Nawāb Shujāuddin ; and the second, the dismissal of Mardan Ali Khān, Mir Murtazā, Hāji Lutf Ali Khān and Muhammad Ghaus Khān, who had been ever hostile to him and to the other members of his family,

Insincere negotiations of Alivardi with Sarfarāz

[59] Riyāz, p. 312. Bāhmaniah is situated about four miles to the north of the Murshidābād city.

[60] Dewānsarāi lies about 12 miles to the north of the Murshidābād city.

[61] Riyāz, p. 312; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 491; Yusuf, f. 14. Komrah is situated about 20 miles north of the Murshidābād city.

[62] Riyāz, p. 312.

[63] *Ibid*; Salimullah, f. 95B.

[64] *Ibid*.

[65] Basant, according to Riyāz, p. 313.

from their respective services, or the grant of permission to him by the Nawāb to meet them in open field to fight out their respective claims to the Nawāb's favour.[66] To strengthen Sarfarāz's belief in his fidelity towards him still more, Alivardi swore on the Korān[67] or, as the author of Riyāz has observed, affected to do so, that he would appear personally before him the next morning with folded hands to beg his pardon.[68] The credulous Nawāb was deceived for the time being and ordered his butler to prepare a feast on the next day.[69] But his faithful generals like Muhammad Ghaus Khān, Mir Sharf-uddin, Mardan Ali Khān, and others, soon convinced him of Alivardi's duplicity,[70] and so all negotiations ended in smoke.[71]

Sarfarāz's generals gave him just the right advice. Alivardi never wanted any amicable settlement though it would appear so from the accounts of Yusuf Ali, Ghulām Husain, and Muhammad Wafā.[72] All his negotiations were meant simply to cover his real intention under the cloak of friendship till he could prepare himself adequately for an attack on Sarfarāz. He was too calculating to hazard his game by hasty actions. As a matter of fact, the goal of his ambition was nothing short of the *masnad* of Bengal.[73]

Passing beyond the boundary of the *chāklā* of Akbarnagar (Rājmahal), Alivardi encamped in an area extending from

66 Yusuf, f. 14; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 491.

67 *Ibid.*

68 The author of Siyar has remarked that Alivardi actually swore on the Korān, a copy of which was sent by him to Sarfarāz through Hakim Muhammad Ali Khān. But it is stated in Riyāz that he " enclosed in a casket a brick giving out it contained the Holy Korān, held it in his hand and swore by it that next morning he would with folded hands present himself before Nawāb Sarfarāz Khan and would sue for pardon for his misconduct." Hāji Mustafā, the translator of Siyar, has also noted that instead of the Holy Korān there was only " a brick properly fashioned and covered with cloth of gold " (Cambray Edn., Vol. I, p. 335, footnote).

69 Riyāz, p. 313.

70 *Ibid*, p. 314.

71 *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 491-92.

72 fs. 9B-10A.

73 Bayān, fs. 100-103.

Aurañgābād near Suti to Charkā Baliāghāṭā,[74] on the west bank of the river Bhāgīrathī. On hearing of his advance Sarfarāz marched from Komrah to Giriā,[75] on the east bank of the river, but Ghaus Khān crossed it and marched forward to a place lying at a distance of about ten miles from Alivardi's camp.[76] From its respective camp, each party tried to seduce the soldiers of the other. Ghaus Khān, Mardan Ali Khān, and their friends opened secret negotiations with some generals of Alivardi, holding out promises of rewards, in order to win them over to their side.[77] Similarly, Hāji Ahmad, Jagat Seth Fatehchānd, and others tried to sow seeds of treachery among Sarfarāz's soldiers and to win over some of them to the cause of Alivardi.[78]

Advance of Sarfarāz towards Alivardi's camp near Suti.

Both the parties had nearly equal force, that is, there were about 30,000 men (20,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry) on each side.[79] But Alivardi had 3,000 valiant Afghāns in his cavalry and "his infantry levied in Bihār, were much stouter than those in the army of Sarfarāz Khān, who were mostly natives of Bengal."[80] Sarfarāz had twenty pieces of artillery and Alivardi also had some.[81]

Strength of the army on both sides.

74 Riyāz, p. 312; Salimullah, f. 15B.

75 Siyar, p. 491; Riyāz, Vol. II, p. 313. Gheria of Orme and other writers.

76 Suti lies on the west bank of the Bhāgīrathi at a distance of about 12 miles to the north of Raghunāthgañj, the headquarters of the modern Jañgīpur subdivision of the Murshidābād district. It is near Suti that the Bhāgīrathī branches off from the Ganges. Aurañgābād is situated 3 miles to the north-west of Suti on the same bank of the river Bhāgīrathī. Giriā is situated on the east bank of the Bhāgīrathī at a distance of about five miles north-west of Jañgīpur. Charkā Baliāghāṭā refers to the two villages of Charkā and Baliāghāṭā, lying close to each other—the former about 10 miles and the latter about 7 miles to the south of Sutī.

77 Yusuf, f. 15; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 29A.

78 Riyāz, p. 314. It is to be noted that the Jagat Seths were not only important in the economic sphere, but were a principal party in the political changes, revolutions, and conspiracies of the period from Shujāuddin to Sirājuddaulah.

79 Holwell, I.H.E., p. 95; Orme, *Indostan*, Vol. II, p. 31.

80 *Ibid.*

81 Orme and Holwell wrongly state that Alivardi had no artillery.

Alivardi planned to attack Sarfarāz from three sides and so divided his army into three batches.[82] One under a brave Hindu officer, named Nandalāl, was sent against Ghaus Khān and Mir Sharf-uddin. He himself crossed the river Bhāgīrathī with the other two batches, composed mainly of Afghāns and *Baheliā* musketeers.[83] One batch marched at dead of night (9th April, 1740) to the rear of Sarfarāz's army, under the command of Nawāzish Muhammad Khān, who had in his company Abdul Ali Khān, Shamshir Khān, and some other Afghān commanders. Alivardi proceeded with the other at two o'clock the same night against Sarfarāz's camp, being guided on the way by some men belonging to the Zamindārī of Rājah Rāmakānta of Rājsāhī.[84] Appearing in front of Sarfarāz's camp Alivardi first fired one of his guns when, as previously arranged, the party of his troops under Nawāzish Muhammad attacked Sarfarāz's army from the rear and Nandalāl opened the contest with Ghaus Khān. Sarfarāz, after finishing his morning prayer, got up instantly on an elephant with a copy of the Korān in his hand, entered into the thick of the fighting, and commenced discharging arrows.[85] Thus a furious contest ensued near Giriā early in the morning of the 10th April, 1740.[86] Some prominent generals of Sarfarāz, such as Mir Kamāl, brother of Mir Muhammad Baqir, surnamed Baqir Ali Khān (nephew of Nawāb Shujāuddin),[87] Mir Gadāi, Mir Ahmad, Mir Sirājuddin, Hāji

March of three batches of Alivardi's soldiers against Sarfarāz.

Battle of Giriā, 10th April, 1740.

[82] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 492.

[83] Those recruited from Oudh.

[84] Riyāz, p. 315; Salimullah, f. 99B. The Zamindāri of Rājsāhī then extended from Rājmahal to Bogurā over the eastern portion of modern Birbhum district, north-eastern portion of modern Murshidābād district, the greater portion of the districts of Rājsāhī, Bogurā, and Pābnā, eastern portion of the Māldah district, and north-eastern parts of the Jessore and Nadiā districts.

[85] Riyāz, p. 316; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 492.

[86] Letter to Court, 4th August, 1740 (I.R.D.-Ft. M.); Yusuf, f. 16. The exact site of the battle near the villages of Mominṭolā and Sibnārāyaṇpur, on the east bank of the Bhāgīrathī, has been washed away by the river.

[87] Riyāz, p. 317.

Lutf Ali Khān, Kurbān Ali Khān, and a young unmarried son of Mirzā Iraj Khān (the Paymaster of Sarfarāz's army), soon fell dead on the field.[88] Sayyid Husain Khān, Shahāmat Ali Khān, Nasrat-ullah Khān, and several other generals, were severely wounded.[89] Rāyrāyān Ālamchānd also got a wound and fled away to Murshidābād[90] only to die there,[91] soon after the accession of Alivardi to the *masnad* of Bengal. All this caused a stampede in Sarfarāz's army.[92] Mardan Ali Khān, who commanded the vanguard of the army, and many others, fled away from the field,[93] and there remained for the Nawāb, round his elephant, only a few of his old Georgian and Abyssinian slaves.[94] At this critical moment his elephant-driver offered to take him to Badi-us-Zaman, the Zamindār of Birbhum. But Sarfarāz replied, by striking him on the neck :—"I will not retreat before these dogs."[95] Thus he decided to fight like a hero and advanced to oppose his enemies amidst showers of rockets, cannon balls, arrows, and musket-shots.[96]

Heavy casualties on the Nawāb's side.

Heroic fight and death of Sarfarāz.

But a musket-shot suddenly struck him on the forehead.[97] He fell instantly on the *mik dambar* (litter) of his elephant and died a heroic

88 Riyāz ; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 493 ; Salimullah, f. 100A ; Yusuf, f. 17.

89 *Ibid.* 90 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 493.

91 Salimullah and the author of Riyāz write that Ālamchānd was taken home by his followers almost half-dead because of a wound in the right arm caused by a shot, and that out of shame and repentance he committed suicide there by swallowing diamond-dust. Holwell notes that his wife rebuked him much for his faithlessness, for which he committed suicide by taking poison.

92 Riyāz, p. 317 ; Salimullah, f. 100B. 93 *Ibid.*

94 *Ibid.* Bhāratcāndra also refers to the employment of Abyssinians (hāvsī) in the Burdwān court. Thus there were then many Abyssinians in the service of the aristocracy of Bengal.

95 Riyāz, p. 317. 96 *Ibid.*

97 According to Riyāz and Holwell (*op. cit.*, pp. 98-99) it was thrown by a traitor from his own camp, but they are not supported on this point by any other writer, not even by Salimullah. Holwell, Orme, and Scrafton give wrong dates of Sarfarāz's defeat and death ; according to Holwell (*op. cit.*, p. 101, footnote) these took place on the 25th January, 1741 ; and according to Orme (*op. cit.*, p. 31) and Scrafton (R. I.) in March, 1741.

death[98] at the age of thirty-six.[98a] Just as this calamity took place, Mir Habib, Shamshir Khān Qureshi, *faujdār* of Silhet, and Rājah Gandharba, all of whom had been watching the course of events from a distance, took to their heels, like so many cowards; and Mir Hāider Shāh and Khwajah Basant also ran away to Murshidābād by concealing themselves in a *rath* (a carriage having four wheels).[99] The Nawāb's corpse was carried to Murshidābād by his faithful elephant-driver and was buried secretly at dead of night in the compound of his palace at Nuktākhālī by his son Hafizullah Khān and by Yāsin Khan, *faujdār* of Murshidābād.[100]

Meanwhile, on the west bank of the Bhāgīrathī, Ghaus Khān and Mir Sharfuddin had defeated and killed Nandālāl.[101] Having still no knowledge of Sarfarāz's death, Ghaus Khān sent a horseman to his camp conveying the news of his victory and his suggestion that they should join together and assault the enemies.[102] But to his great regret the horseman returned only to communicate to him the sad news of his master's death.[103] This information was indeed extremely shocking for the faithful general.[104] But he was made of a different stuff from that of the so many mean-minded and pigeon-hearted fellows, who had run away from the battle-field instantly on Sarfarāz's death without stopping for a moment even to enquire about the Nawāb's corpse. In a manner befitting a valiant warrior, he preferred a heroic fight and noble death to an ignoble subjection to his master's enemy. He exhorted his two sons, named Muhammad Kutub and Muhammad Pir,[105] who also were endowed with

98 Riyāz, p. 317; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 493.

98a Yusuf, f. 17.

99 Riyāz, p. 317.

100 Riyāz, p. 320. Nuktākhālī is known locally as Lañgtākhālī or more commonly as Naginābāgh.

101 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 493; Riyāz, p. 318.

102 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 493.

103 *Ibid.*

104 *Ibid.*

105 Called Bābar in Riyāz, p. 318.

considerable valour and courage, to fight with a renewed vigour along with those few who chose to stand by them. Thus with a handful of comrades he fell furiously upon Alivardi's army and "heroically dashed upon to its centre,"[106] when he was struck by two musket-balls discharged by Chedan Hāzārī's musketeers.[107] His two sons, who were as worthy as their father, also died fighting bravely on the field of battle. Another brave and faithful commander of Sarfarāz, named Mir Dilir, disdaining to survive his master, rushed towards the enemy with sixteen soldiers, that still stood by him, and fell fighting valiantly.[108] The fight was still continued by Mir Sharfuddin, who with some horsemen galloped towards Alivardi, and discharged two arrows at him, one of which hit the bow which Alivardi held in his hand, and the other caused a slight injury on his right shoulder.[109] He was about to draw his bow-string once again, when his old friends, Shaikh Jahānyār and Muhammed Zulfiqār, two generals of Alivardi, intervened and pointed out to him the futility of fighting any longer. They promised that his honour would remain untarnished and prevailed upon him to withdraw from the contest. He then left for Birbhum with his followers.[110] The Portuguese Pāñchu, Superintendent of Sarfarāz Khān's artillery, still fought desperately but he was soon attacked and killed by some Afghān generals of Alivardi.[111] Bijay Singh, a Rājput commander of Sarfarāz, displayed great bravery and heroism at this critical moment. He was in charge of the rear of Sarfarāz's army at

Bravery and death of Ghāus Khān with his two sons, and also of Mir Dilir.

Last unsuccessful attempts of Mir Sharfuddin and Pāñchu; death of the latter.

106 Riyāz, p. 318.

107 *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 493. Chedan Hāzārī was a commander of the *barkandāzes* (matchlockmen) in Alivardi's army. Holwell, I.H.E, p. 97.

108 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 493.

109 *Ibid.*

110 Riyāz, p. 310; Salimullah, f. 102B.

111 Riyāz, p. 319.

Komrah, but, on hearing of the death of his master, he galloped with only a few horsemen through the ranks of Alivardi's army to the place, where his elephant stood, and attempted to bring him down from the animal with one stroke of his spear. But under the command of Alivardi, Dawar Quli Khān, Superintendent (*darogā*) of his artillery, immediately opposed him and shot him dead. His son, a lad of only nine years of age, who was blessed with an extraordinary courage, stood up to guard the corpse of his father with a drawn sword in hand. Struck with admiration at his uncommonly brave conduct, Alivardi ordered his soldiers not to oppose the removal of his father's dead body, which was cremated according to Rājput rites and customs.[112] It is pleasant to find instances of heroism and bravery among the Rājputs in that period of degeneration; and it is also interesting to note that Muslim rulers could still count on the active support of Rājput soldiers.

Bravery of a Rajput commander of Sarfarāz, named Bijay Singh, and of his son Zālim Singh.

Alivardi's victory at Giriā marked a turning-point in his career. There remained no longer any formidable opponent to oppose his advance to Murshidābād, the then capital city of the province of Bengal, situated 22 miles to the south-east of Giriā, on the east bank of the Bhāgīrathī. His occupation of the Bengal *masnad* was now only a question of time. But he was not a man to be flushed with success and to spoil his game by precipitate steps. He knew that there was many a slip between the cup and the lip, and so proceeded most cautiously to achieve his end. The news of Sarfarāz's death had thrown the whole city of Murshidābād into great confusion and disorder.[113] So immediately after his victory at Giriā, Alivardi sent Hāji Ahmad to Murshidābād in order to pacify the people of that city, to restore order, and to guard over all the departments

Hāji Ahmad was sent to Murshidābād immediately after the battle of Giriā.

[112] Riyāz, p. 319; Salimullah. f. 103A.

[113] *Ibid.*

of Sarfarāz's government and all the chambers of his palace.[114] The attempts of Hafizullah, Yāsin Khān and Ghazanafar Husain, a son-in-law of Sarfarāz, to defend the city of Murshidābād against the advance of Hāji Ahmad and Alivardi's troops having failed, owing to the unwillingness of the vanquished soldiers of Sarfarāz to fight any longer, they surrendered at last to the victors.[115] Hāji Ahmad proclaimed his brother's victory by beat of drum, promised free pardon and protection to all, and with the assistance of Yāsin Khān brought the officers of Sarfarāz Khān, together with his treasures and *hārem*, under his control.[116]

Alivardi entered the city of Murshidābād.

Marching from Giriā, Alivardi did not all at once enter into the city of Murshidābād. He halted for three days at a short distance from it, on the bank of the rivulet Gobrā,[117] in order to wink at the sacking of the city by his Afghān and *Baheliā* soldiers.[118] On entering the city Alivardi with his Machiavellian astuteness first of all tried to soothe the wounded feelings of the relatives of Sarfarāz with a view to winning them over, by feigning penitence for his vile conduct towards the deceased Nawāb. Thus, he visited Sarfarāz's sister, Nafisā Begam, in her chamber, tried to console her with seeming repentance, and solicited her pardon.[119] But his affected speech[120] could elicit no reply from her. He then proceeded to the *Chihil Satun* (the hall of forty pillars built under the orders of Murshid Quli Jāfar Khān), where he ascended the *masnad* with

Alivardi's attempt to conciliate the relatives of Sarfarāz Khān.

He ascended the *masnad* with all formalities.

114 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 494.

115 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 313; Riyāz, p. 320; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 491; Salimullah, f. 104A.

116 *Ibid*; Riyāz, p. 321.

117 The Gobrā rivulet now runs through the north of Jiāgañj (situated on the east bank of the Bhāgīrathī, 6 miles north of the Murshidābād city and opposite Azimgañj Railway station on the East Indian Railway). It is at a distance of 7 or 8 miles north of the Murshidābād city.

118 Salimullah, f. 104A; Riyāz, p. 321. The author of Siyar, evidently a partisan of Alivardi, has probably suppressed this fact though he writes that Alivardi entered into the city of Murshidābād two days after the death of Sarfarāz (Vol. II, p. 494).

119 Yusuf Ali, f. 18; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 32a; Siyar, Vol. II, 494. 120 *Ibid*

all the necessary formalities.[121] Drums, *nāgārahs* (large kettledrums of iron), etc., were duly sounded, and the civil as well as the military officers of the government and the grandees of the city of Murshidābād presented *nazars* to the new Nawāb,[122] not, indeed, out of any sincere attachment to him, but by way of formal submission to his authority which he had established by right of might. In the innermost recesses of their hearts, they harboured feelings of resentment and hatred towards him for his ungrateful conduct as regards his patron's son.[123]

Attempt of Alivardi to conciliate the discontented partisans of Sarfarāz;

But Alivardi, with his usual prudence, tried to remove their discontent by all possible means. Khawjah Abdul Karim tells us that "by behaving kindly and being on friendly terms with all, by distributing money and by acting with discretion, Alivardi gained over to his cause all men living far and near.[124]

provisions made for the members of his family.

He also took care to make certain provisions for the maintenance of the members of Sarfarāz's family. Nafisā Begam was allowed to possess, in addition to her own property, a portion of the *khās tāluq* (personal demesne) of Murshid Quli Khān yielding an annual revenue of one lac.[125] In April, 1741 she was taken to Dacca by Nawāzish Muhammad, who began to regard her as a mother and entrusted her with the control over his household affairs.[126] The married wives (apart from the rest of the *hārem*) of Sarfarāz were also sent away to Dacca with their children.[127] All the members of his family were granted monthly allowances for their maintenance, special care being taken of Akā Bābā, an illegitimate son of Sarfarāz who was born on the day of his father's death and was later on adopted

121 Yusuf, f. 18.
122 Siyar, Vol. II, 494.
123 *Ibid.*
124 Bayān, fs. 101-03.
125 Yusuf, f. 18.
126 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 499.
127 Salimullah, f. 104B; Riyāz, p. 321.

as a son by Nafisā Begam.[128] But Hāji Ahmed and his followers showed singular ingratitude and lack of decency by taking possession of the 1,500 women of Sarfarāz's *hārem*.[129]

Alivardi commenced his administration with sound finances, as he could get possession of late Nawāb's hoarded wealth amounting to 68 lacs or, according to another version, 70 lacs of rupees in cash, besides jewels, gold and silver bullion, and other costly articles worth 5 crores of rupees.[130] He also possessed himself of the wealth of Hāji Lutf Ali, Manuchar Khān, and Mir Murtazā.[131] To secure and ensure an administration to his liking, he effected the following changes in the personnel of the officers of the state. Nawāzish Muhammad, his eldest nephew and son-in-law (husband of Ghasiti Begam), was appointed Deputy Governor of Dacca, including Chittagong, Tipperah, and Silhet, with Husain Quli Khān as his deputy. But as both of them remained mostly at Murshidābād, the direct administration of these parts devolved on Husain Quli's *diwān*, Rāy Gokulchānd, who was a man of keen intelligence and discharged his task creditably. Alivardi's youngest nephew Zainuddin, who had married his daughter Aminā Begam (the mother of Sirājuddaulah), was appointed Deputy Governor of Bihār. Abdul Ali Khān, an uncle of the historian Ghulām Husain and a cousin of Alivardi, was placed by Zainuddin in charge of the administration of Tirhut in addition to his duties as the revenue-collector of the *paraganās* of Bihār and Besoc (Biswak).[132] Kasim Ali Khān, brother of Alivardi's Begam, was replaced by Mir Muhammad Jāfar Khān as Paymaster of the old army; but he was later on given the post of the *faujdār* of Rangpur, where he succeeded in gaining both credit and wealth. The Paymastership of the

Changes in the personnel of the state-officers.

128 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 493; Salimullah, f. 105A; Riyāz, p. 322.

129 Yusuf, f. 19; Riyāz, p. 321.

130 Yusuf, f. 19.

131 *Ibid.*

132 These are in the south-east of the Patna district.

new army was bestowed on Nasrullah Beg Khān, who proved to be a very faithful officer of the state. The Superintendentship of the Nawāb's artillery was entrusted to Mirzā Mazar Ali, *alias* Hāider Ali Khān, a cousin of Husain Quli Khān, deputy of Nawāzish Muhammad; and the Superintendentship of the *nawarah* or the state fleet at Dacca was nominally bestowed on the Nawāb's young grandson Mirzā Muhammad, better known as Sirājuddaulah. Sirājuddaulah's brother Mirzā Kāzim, who had been adopted by Nawāzish Muhammad Khān as his son and designated Ekrāmuddaulah Pādshah Quli Khān, was invested with a similar nominal command over the army at Dacca. On the death of Ālamchānd, the old *diwān* of the state, soon after Alivardi's accession, the *diwānī* of *Khālsā* with the title of *rāyrāyān* was confered upon his *peshkār* Chin Rāy, who proved to be an honest officer and was highly esteemed by Alivardi. Jānkīrām, *diwān* of Alivardi's house-hold affairs, was made *diwān* of miscellaneous departments. Ghulam Husain, an old follower of Alivardi, was appointed his chamberlain (*hājib*) in place of Mir Murtazā; and Asadullah Khān, a son-in-law of Hāji Ahmad, who had been serving as the *faujdār* of Rājmahal since the time of Nawāb Shujāuddin, was made the *faujdār* of Bhāgalpur also. Allah Yār Khān, step-brother of Alivardi, Mir Muhammad Jāfar Khān, his brother-in-law,[133] Fakhrullah Beg Khān, Nurullah Beg Khān, Mustafā Khān, and a few others were honoured with *mansabs* and other distinctions.[134]

Having thus completed the necessary arrangements for the security of his position at Murshidābād, Alivardi thought it necessary to obtain a formal confirmation[135] of his usurped

133 *Vide ante*, Chapter I, fn. 49.

134 All these details have been gathered from Yusuf Ali, fs. 19-20; Siyar, p. 495; Riyāz, pp. 323-24.

135 In spite of the virtual collapse of the Mughal Empire by the middle of the 18th century, the name of the Emperor and the fiction of imperial sovereignty were sought to be utilised by different competitors in the political games of the 18th century. During the closing years of that century, the Marāthas, the English, and also the French, tried to use these to serve their own ends.

authority over the Bengal *subah* from Emperor Muhammad Shāh. But he could not achieve his object all at once owing to two untoward circumstances. On the one hand, Muhammad Shāh seemed greatly affected on hearing of the revolution in Bengal and is said to have exclaimed that the whole Empire was convulsed and shattered as a result of the invasion of Nādir Shāh.[136] On the other, Ishaq Khān Mutāmanuddaulāh, a friend and principal supporter of Alivardi at the Delhi court, died[137] on the 18th April, 1740.[138] Still Alivardi left no stone unturned to gain his point. Through the mediation of Saāduddin Khān, *mir atish* (Head of the artillery) of the Emperor, he forwarded various excuses before him and expressed his intention to send to him a part of the wealth of the late Nawāb in return for his being confirmed as the *subahdār* of Bengal.[139] This temptation proved too strong for Muhammad Shāh to resist, and he readily swallowed the bait. He deputed Murid Khān to Bengal to bring over to Delhi the promised sum, and also an amount equivalent to the tribute of Bengal, that had fallen in arrears since the death of Sarfarāz.[140] Apprehending that Murid Khān's arrival at Murshidābād might cause some trouble, Alivardi met him at Rājmahal and delivered to him 40 lacs of rupees in cash[141] along with jewels, ornaments, gold and silver utensils, rich clothes etc., worth 70 lacs, and a number of horses and elephants, on account of the property of Sarfarāz.[142] He further handed over to him for the Emperor 14 lacs of rupees as his own *peshkash*,[143] in addition to the annual surplus of the revenue of Bengal, Bihār and Orissā

Alivardi purchased Imperial confirmation of his new authority through bribery and fraud.

136 Riyāz, p. 322.
137 Yusuf, f. 20.
138 Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vol. I, p. 20.
139 Yusuf, f. 20.
140 *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 496.
141 Riyāz, p. 322; Salimullah, f. 105A.
142 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 496; Yusuf, f. 31.
143 Riyāz, p. 322; Salimullah, f. 105A.

amounting to one crore of rupees. He also sent three lacs to the *Wazir* Qamruddin Khān, one lac to the *Bakhshi* Asaf Jāh Nizām-ul-Mulk, and smaller sums to other nobles at the Imperial Court.[144] After the departure of Murid Khān, Alivardi returned to Murshidābād towards the end of the month of April, when he received from the Emperor the recognition of his authority as the *subahdār* of Bengal[145] along with the titles of Shujāulmulk and Husamuddaulah (the valorous of the state and the sword of the Empire). Nawāzish Muhammad Khān also received the title of Shahāmat Jang, Zainuddin that of Haibat Jang, Sayeed Ahmad that of Saulat Jang, and Atāullah that of Sabet Jang.[146]

Comment on the Bengal Revolution of 1740 A.D.

The Bengal revolution of 1739-40 was a significant episode in the history of the province, and also of the Mughal Empire, which was going through a more disastrous revolution at the same time. It shows how the political atmosphere of the time was utterly vitiated by the vices of inordinate ambition, treachery, and ingratitude. Alivardi's behaviour towards Sarfarāz, son of his benefactor to whom he was indebted for his early prosperity, was highly abominable. Even Ghulām Hussain, with his usual partiality for him, could not justify it fully.[147] A Nemesis followed it when his favourite grandson, Sirājuddaulah, fell a victim to the same forces that had been used by him to overthrow Sarfarāz. It might be very well said that the battle of Plassey was the reply of historical justice to the battle of Giriā. The conduct of Muhammad Shah was also unworthy of the position he held. To give consent to an act of usurpation by accepting bribes was certainly an undignified transaction on the part of the Delhi court. Thus, when the supreme head of the state and

144 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 496.
145 Yusuf, f. 21.
146 *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 495.
147 *Ibid*, p. 494.

its high executive sold themselves for a mess of pottage, it could not but sink down into moral degradation bringing about its tragic collapse.

Consolidation of Alivardi's authority.

The battle of Giriā indeed made Alivardi the undisputed ruler of Bengal and Bihār, but Orissā, which formed an appanage of the Bengal *subah*, still remained beyond his control. Immediately after the death of Sarfarāz, Rustam Jang (originally known as Murshid Quli), who had been appointed Deputy Governor of Orissā by his father-in-law Nawāb Shujāuddin, after the death of his (Shujāuddin's) son Muhammad Taqi Khān, at first exchanged negotiations with Alivardi for a compromise.[147a] But he was soon goaded by his son-in-law Mirzā Bāqar, an Ispahani, and also by his own wife Dardānah Begam, a spirited lady, to avenge the death of Sarfarāz by holding out against Alivardi.[148] He then refused to recognise the usurper's authority and commenced making necessary preparations to oppose him. Having summoned an assembly of his generals and soldiers, he exhorted them in a stirring speech to espouse the just cause by fighting against Alivardi, who had proved so treacherous to his master Sarfarāz. He expressed: "My cause being as just as my case is critical, there remains nothing for me now but to ascertain your minds regarding this iniquitous contest. If you are for standing by me, let us set out and fight together; but if you are disposed otherwise, then, for God's sake, explain yourselves early and in time, so that I may act accordingly and provide timely for my safety."[149] This produced the desired effect on the minds of his troops. Abed Ali Khān, his commander-in-chief, informed him, on behalf of all present in the assembly, that he could rely on their fidelity in his intended fight against Alivardi.

Rustam Jang goaded to avenge the death of Sarfarāz.

147a Siyar, Vol. II, p. 496; Yusuf, f. 21; Salimullah, f. 106B.

148 Yusuf, f. 21.

149 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 497.

He marched out of Cuttack.

Then leaving his wife Dardānāh Begam and his son Yahyā Khān with all his wealth in the fort of Barābāṭī,[150] situated at the bifurcation of the two rivers, the Mahānadī and the Kāṭjurī,[151] Rustam Jang marched out of the city of Cuttack in December, 1740 with his two sons-in-law, Mirzā Bāqār Khān and Allāuddin Muhammad Khān,[152] at the head of a strong army. Passing through Balasore and after crossing the Barā Bālang river that flows by it, he encamped in the plain of Phulwārī (lying four miles north of the Balasore town), which was naturally defended by thick forests and rivulets with steep banks on all sides.[153] To make his position as impregnable as possible, he formed a ring of 300 cannon round his camp[154] and raised entrenchments at its weak parts.[155]

In the meanwhile, Alivardi got himself fully equipped with all the requisites for an expedition into Orissā with a view to wresting its government from the relatives of the deceased Nawāb.[156] Probably, during Rustam Jang's negotiations with him for an amicable settlement, he tried to seduce his troops through Mukhlis Ali Khān, the Paymaster of Rustam Jang's army and a son-in-law of Hāji Ahmad.[157] On hearing of Rustam Jang's advançe, he started from Murshidābād in the month of January, 1741, with his nephew Sayeed Ahmad (surnamed Mahām-ud-daulah Saulat Jang) at the head of ten or twelve thousand cavalry, leaving Hāji Ahmad and Nawāzish Muhammad (Shahāmat Jang) in charge of the government of Bengal.[158] By

Alivardi's march into Orissā.

[150] Riyāz, pp. 325-26.

[151] Ain, Vol. II, p. 126.

[152] Riyāz, pp. 326-27.

[153] Yusuf, f. 22; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 497.

[154] *Ibid.*

[155] Riyāz, f. 326.

[156] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 496.

[157] Salimullah, f. 106B; Riyāz, p. 325.

[158] Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 496-97; Yusuf, f. 21; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 57A. According to Riyāz, Alivardi marched to Orissā with a large army numbering more than one lac in cavalry and infantry, which seems to be a rather exaggerated figure.

forced marches he reached Midnāpur, and, having won over the local Zamindārs to his side through various presents, proceeded to Jalasore.[159] But to cross the river Subarṇarekhā, which flows due west of Jalasore, at the ferry of Rājghāṭ, proved to be a difficult task, as the place was full of thick jungles and was defended by a garrison of *Chawārs* (mixed *kṣetrīs* by caste) and *Khaṇḍāits* (also mixed *kṣetrīs*), posted there by Rājah Jagadiśvara Bhañja of Mayurbhañj.[160] Far from lending Alivardi the assistance solicited by him, the Rājah opposed his advance. Alivardi, however, quickly overcame this opposition by opening fire on his enemy's troops, and, having crossed the river, encamped at Rāmchandrapur, situated at a distance of three miles from the plain of Phulwārī.[161] Though so near Rustam Jang's camp, Alivardi could not attack him immediately owing to scarcity of provisions in his camp, caused by the failure of the Zamindārs of Midnāpur and the neighbouring tracts to send him the full quantity of expected supplies.[162] The little, that could be sent by them, was also intercepted on the way by the Zamindārs of Orissā, who, out of their love for Rustam Jang, were not favourably disposed towards the usurper.[163] Indeed, the distress in Alivardi's camp was so acute that a tobacco-dealer had to sell his commodity from on the back of an elephant for fear of being robbed of it by the soldiers of Alivardi.[164] Placed in such a critical situation, Alivardi thought it expedient to come to terms with Rustam Jang. His commander, Mustafā Khān, gave him, however, an encouraging advice to throw up new entrenchments during the rainy season and to re-attempt the subjugation of Orissā after its expiry.[165]

[159] Salimullah, f. 107B; Riyāz, p. 327.
[160] *Ibid.*
[161] *Ibid.*
[162] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 497; Yusuf, f. 23.
[163] *Ibid.*
[164] Muzaffarnāmah, f. 34A.
[165] Riyāz, p. 328.

But the collision came off soon. Rustam Jang's son-in-law Mirzā Bāqar, impelled by the impetuosity of youth, sallied out of his camp with his contingent, composed of Sayyids of Barhā,[166] and fell on Alivardi's troops. Alivardi quickly marched forward to meet his enemy, and a bloody battle ensued in the plain of Phulwārī on the 3rd of March, 1741.[167]

Battle of Phulwārī, 3rd March, 1741.

On the first attack Alivardi seized the whole of Rustam Jang's artillery, which had been left rather unguarded.[168] But in spite of this heavy loss, Rustam Jang, Mirzā Bāqar, and their Barhā soldiers fought so vigorously that some of the Bengal soldiers fled away from the field of battle, leaving their master on the verge of defeat and disgrace.[169] Even the elephants, on which Alivardi and his Begam were seated, were chased to a distance of about two miles from the battle-field.[170] Finding Alivardi on the verge of distress, Mānickchānd, *peshkār*[171] of the Rājah of Burdwān, who had come with an auxiliary force to assist him, now tried secretly as a shrewd and time-serving man to humour Rustam Jang and to join his party from considerations of personal safety. But Mirzā Bāqar opposed his proposal on suspicion of treachery, and he had to fight for Alivardi.[172]

There were, however, some black sheep in Rustam Jang's fold, such as Mukhlis Ali Khān, Abed Ali Khān, Muqarrab Khān, and a few other Afghān generals, who soon betrayed their master and went over to the side of his enemy.[173] Nothing daunted by these defections, Mirzā Bāqar attacked the

166 Riyāz, p. 328. Salimullah (f. 109A) and the author of Riyāz (p. 328) suggest hat Mirzā Bāqar was goaded to take the offensive, against the advice of Rustam Jang, by his Afghān soldiers, who had been seduced by Mukhlis Ali Khān.

167 Letter to Court, dated 26th July, 1741.

168 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 497; Yusuf, f. 23.

169 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 497; Yusuf, f. 23; Riyāz, p. 328; Salimullah, f. 109A.

170 *Ibid.*

171 Pesh = before; kār = one who works. Deputy; manager.

172 Salimullah, f. 109B; Riyāz, p. 329.

173 Yusuf, f. 24; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 497; Riyāz, p. 328; Salimullah, f. 109A.

left wing of Alivardi's army, which was commanded by veteran generals like Mir Muhammad Jāfar Khān and Kāsim Ali Khān.[174] This sudden attack first produced great disorder and consternation among the Bengal soldiers, but Mir Muhammad Jāfar Khān soon presented a gallant opposition and helped the vanquished generals of Alivardi, named Musaheb Khān, Dilir Khān and Asālat Khān, sons of the brave Afghān general Umar Khān.[175] This inspired the soldiers of Alivardi to fall on their enemies with fresh vigour and courage,[176] and turned the course of the battle against Rustam Jang. His brave and faithful generals, like Mujtaba Ali, Mir Ali Akbar and Mir Abdul Aziz with his three hundred Sayyid soldiers, were shot to death by Alivardi's *Baheliā* troops.[177] Mirzā Bāqar received several wounds on different parts of his body, and his soldiers being unnerved gave up the contest. Thus the fortune of the battle went against Rustam Jang, who had no other alternative left to him than to retreat from the field for his personal safety. He proceeded on an elephant, followed by his wounded son-in-law in a palanquin, towards the port of Balasore, with two or three thousand men who had still remained faithful.[178] Perhaps from his sad experience of treachery of some of his generals in the immediate past, he dissuaded them from accompanying him beyond the city of Balasore and hurried to the sea-shore.[179] He found there a merchant ship belonging to an old friend of his, named Hāji Mohsin, a native of Surāṭ like himself.[180] Hāji Mohsin had then come to those parts probably on a commercial business and, out of sympathy for

Defeat of Rustam Jang and his retreat to Masaulipatam.

174 Yusuf, f. 24; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 497.
175 *Ibid.*
176 *Ibid.*
177 *Ibid*; Riyāz, p. 330; Salimullah, f. 109B.
178 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 497.
179 *Ibid.*
180 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 498.

his friend, fought on his behalf in the battle of Phulwārī, but was defeated and compelled to retreat. At his suggestion, Rustam Jang now boarded the vessel in his company, with his son-in-law and only a few faithful servants, and reached Masaulipatam within six days. [181]

After the departure of Rustam Jang, Alivardi sent Khairullah Beg, Fakhrullah Beg, and Nurullah Beg, to capture his Begam and his son, Yahyā Khān, who had been abandoned in a forlorn condition in the fort of Barābāṭī. [182] But the timely aid of Rāmchandradeva II (known as Hāfiz Qadar after his conversion to Islam), Zamindār of Khurdah [183] and a sincere friend of Rustam Jang's, saved them from that disgrace, though a portion of their wealth fell into the hands of Alivardi's generals. On hearing of Rustam Jang's defeat and retreat, Rāmchandradeva II, who was a man of high virtues having the noble disposition to help others in distress, deputed out of his own accord a number of carriages and a powerful escort under the command of one of his faithful generals, named Shāh Murad, to bring his friend's family and property out of the city of Cuttack. [184] Acting just in the nick of time, Shāh Murad succeeded in bringing the family of Rustam Jang and a portion of his wealth under his protection. He conducted the family to Iñchāpuram in the Ganjām district as quickly as possible. Anwāruddin Khān, Governor of Iñchāpuram, who was an old acquaintance of Rustam Jang, accorded a hospitable reception to the distressed family of his friend.[185] Rustam Jang could find time to think of his unfortunate family only after his safe arrival at Masaulipatam, when

His distressed family received help from the Zamindār of Khurdah.

181 Siyar Vol. II, p. 498.

182 Selimullah, f. 110A ; Riyāz, p. 331.

183 Ghulām Husain writes that he was also superintendent of the temple of Puri. He was forcibly converted to Islam by Muhammad Taqi Khān, the illegitimate son of Shujāuddin Muhammad Khān, Deputy Governor of Orissā before Rustam Jang, and had to assume the name of Hāfiz Qadar. R. D. Banerjee, *History of Orissā*, Vol II, p. 80.

184 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 498.

185 *Ibid.*

according to his instruction Mirzā Bāqar went to Iñchāpuram and brought it over to him. Thus by a strange irony of fate the Deputy Governor of Orissā, driven out of his own province, had to seek shelter in a destitute conditon with his wife, son and son-in-law, in the dominions of Asaf Jāh Nizām-ul-Mulk. [186]

Rustam Jang in the Deccan.

Alivardi hurriedly advanced to Cuttack and seized 2 lacs of rupees in cash and precious articles of the same value belonging to Rustam Jang. [187] He stayed in Orissā for about a month with a view to establishing his authority there. [188] His experience of the local affairs gained during his early days (during the Deputy Governorship of Shujāuddin), and his previous acquaintance with the local Zamindārs, now stood him in good stead. [189] He placed his nephew Sayeed Ahmad (Saulat Jang) in charge of the government of Orissā and also left there Gujar Khān, one of his veteran Ruhelā generals, in command of a contingent of three thousand cavalry and four thousand infantry. [190] He then turned his attention on the administrative affairs there. [191] He appointed Kāsim Ali Khān, brother of his Begam and so long paymaster of his troops, [192] *faujdār* of Rangpur, to fill up the vacancy created by the transfer of Saulat Jang to Orissā.

Alivardi's arrangements for the administration of Orissā; appointment of his nephew Saulat Jang as Governor there.

The appointment of Saulat Jang as the Deputy Governor of Orissā was a bad choice on the part of Alivardi. Lacking in morals, tact, and intelligence, he was unfit for governing a newly-conquered area. His overbearing manners, unbridled licentiousness, and excessive lust for money, which he squeezed from the rich by extortionate means, gave rise to a wide-spread

Saulat Jang unfit for governing a newly-acquired territory.

186 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 498, Riyāz, p. 330.
187 Yusuf, f. 24B; Salimullah, f. 110A.
188 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 498; Salimullah, f. 110B; Riyāz, p. 332.
189 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 498.
190 *Ibid*; Riyāz, p 332.
191 Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 498-99.
192 *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 24.

discontent against his government.[193] Further, like one who cuts the branch of a tree on which he sits, he foolishly alienated his soldiers, who had come from Bengal, and on whose loyalty and service he could naturally rely, by an ill-advised policy of reducing their pay. This unsound economy caused their dissatisfaction and led to their defection from the Orissā military service.[194] At the same time he took a suicidal step by admitting into his military service the generals like Salim Khān, Darvesh Khān, Nizāmat Khāu, Mir Azizullah, and some others,[195] who had formerly served under Rustam Jung and entertained in the heart of their hearts feelings of sincere attachment to him and to his son-in-law.[196] The unpopularity and inefficiency of the new ruler encourged them to invite Mirzā Bāqar, who also had been so long watching the course of events in Orissā from her south-eastern frontier, to enter into the province.[197]

Return of Mirzā Bāqar.

Thus a golden opportunity presented itself to Mirzā Bāqar, who at once instigated the enemies of Saulat Jang to defy his authority openly and himself marched from the Deccan with a hired band of Marātha infantry for the recovery of Orissā. Under the leadership of Shāh Murad, the saviour of Rustam Jang's family, the conspirators had in the meanwhile broken out into an open revolt, and the city of Cuttack was plunged into great disorder.[198] Gujar Khān, who was deputed by Saulat Jang to pacify them, was killed by them in broad daylight,[199] and Husain Beg Khān, who was greatly responsible for the misgovernment of Orissā, met the same fate.[200] In utter confusion, Saulat Jang sent Qasim Beg, Superintendent of his artillery, and Shaikh Hediātullah,

193 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 500.
194 *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 25.
195 Riyāz, p. 332.
196 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 501.
197 *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 25; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 38B.
198 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 501; Yusuf, f. 25.
199 *Ibid*.
200 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 38B.

faujdār of Cuttack, to make another attempt to placate the insurgents[201]; but finding those two generals unescorted they killed Qasim Beg, while Hediātullah ran away with his life after receiving several wounds.[202] Saulat Jang with his entire family was soon seized by them,[203] and his treasures were plundered.[204] Being timely informed of all these,[205] Mirzā Bāqar entered Cuttack in triumph in the month of August, 1741[206] and restored his authority.[207] Saulat Jang was put under strict confinement in the palace, and his wife, children and other relatives were sent as prisoners into the fort of Barābāṭī.[208] Karam Ali states that Mirzā Bāqar wanted to do away with Saulat Jang, but was prevented by his wife from committing this vile act.[209] The victorious Cuttack army also advanced up to Midnāpur and Hijli and occupied those two places.[210]

Saulat Jang and his family placed under strict confinement.

The misfortunes of Saulat Jang caused grave uneasiness in the mind of Alivardi. The imprisonment of his nephew with his whole family was indeed a great calamity for him. At the same time, the daring return of Mirzā Bāqar into Orissā, and his seizure of its government, meant a severe blow to his prestige and authority. His anxiety was all the more enhanced by his belief that Mirzā Bāqar had been able to effect the revolution in Orissā at the instigation of Asaf Jāh Nizām-ul-Mulk.[211] Being rather perplexed, he consulted his principal officers and relatives as to the means of effecting

Anxiety of Alivardi.

201 Riyāz, p. 333; Salimullah, f. 111A.
202 *Ibid.*
203 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 502; Yusuf, f. 26; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 38B.
204 Riyāz, p. 333.
205 Yusuf, f. 25; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 38B.
206 Letter to Court, 11th December, 1741.
207 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 502.
208 *Ibid.*
209 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 39a.
210 Riyāz, p. 333.
211 Yusuf, f. 26; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 502.

the rescue of Saulat Jang and re-occupying Orissā.[212] Hāji Ahmad and his wife (Saulat Jang's mother), out of anxiety for their son's safefy, requested Alivardi to purchase his release by permitting Mirzā Bāqar to enjoy the government of Orissā.[213] But he could not agree to this humiliating proposal, which, he rightly argued, would affect his prestige and shake the foundation of his government.[214] Mustafā Khān also encouraged him to chastise Mirzā Bāqar in an open encounter. So he made up his mind to march into Orissā to vindicate his prestige and re-establish his authority. To ensure success in the intended expedition, he tried his level best to raise an efficient army and to gather sufficient provisions.[215] The strength of Mustafā Khān's brigade was increased to five thousand cavalry, Shamshir Khan's to three thousand, Sardār Khān's to two thousand, Umār Khān's to three thousand, Atāullah Khān's to two thousand, Hāider Khān's, Fakhrullah Beg Khān's, and Mir Jāfar Khān's to one thousand each, Mir Sharfuddin's, and Shāh Muhammad Māsum's to five hundred each, Amānat Khān's to one thousand five hundred, Mir Kāsim Khān's to two hundred, and Bāhādur Ali Khān's to five hundred.[216] Fateh Rāo, Chedan *Baheliā*, and several other Hindu generals collected fifty thousand musketeers.[217]

He decided to march into Orissā to vindicate his power and honour.

Leaving his eldest nephew Shahāmat Jang, with five thousand cavalry and ten thousand infantry, as his deputy at Murshidābād, Alivardi marched in an auspicious moment towards Cuttack at the head of 20,000 cavalry and with a strong artillery.[218] By forced marches he reached the northern bank of the river Mahānadī, opposite to Cuttack,[219] with his army, while Mirzā Bāqar

Alivardi's march into Orissā.

212 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 502.
213 *Ibid.*
214 *Ibid.*
215 *Ibid.*
216 *Ibid*, p. 503.
217 *Ibid.*
218 *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 26.
219 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 503.

was encamped at Riāpur,[220] on the southern bank of that river.[221] Mirzā Bāqar had kept his bag and baggage at a distance of about 7 or 8 miles from the place of his encampment.[222] Saulat Jang also had been left there within a four-wheeled carriage under the guard of Hāji Muhammad Amīn, brother of Rustam Jang, two Turānians, and five hundred Teliṅgās (foot soldiers from the Deccan), who had instructions to do away with him when any one of Alivardi's party would come to his rescue.[223]

Crossing the river Mahānadī at Jobrā Ghāṭ[224] one chilly winter dawn, Alivardi advanced near the camp of his enemy. The very sight of his huge army struck terror into the hearts of Mirzā Bāqar's soldiers who after a short skirmish took to their heels in various directions to the great disappointment of their master.[225] In utter despondency Mirzā Bāqar again fled with his Marātha allies to the Deccan,[226] by the road of Champahghāṭī,[227] early in December, 1741.[228] He was able to baffle the pursuit of some Afghān soldiers of Alivardi through the help of his old friend Shāh Murad Khān, Commander-in-chief of the Zamindār of Khurdah.[229]

Defeat of Mirzā Bāqar and his flight into the Deccan.

The rescue of Saulat Jang next engaged Alivardi's attention. He commissioned his prominent generals under the command of Mir Jāfar Khān to the task.[230] When they were about to reach the desired spot[231] after crossing the river Kānāhjurī (? Kāṭjurī),[232] Mir Muhammad Amīn Khān (a step-brother of Alivardi and

Rescue of Saulat Jang and his family.

220 Letter to Court, 23rd December, 1741.
221 Yusuf, f. 26.
222 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 503.
223 *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 26; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 39A; Riyāz, pp. 334-35.
224 Riyāz, p. 334.
225 Siyar, Vol, II, p. 503.
226 Yusuf, f. 26; Riyāz, p. 336.
227 Salimullah, f. 114B.
228 Letter to Court, 23rd December, 1741.
229 Salimullah, f. 114B.
230 Yusuf, f. 27.
231 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 503.
232 Yusuf, f. 27.

brother-in-law of Mir Jāfar Khān) left their company along with Asālat Khān, Dilir Khān, and seven other soldiers, and advanced daringly close to the carriage that carried Saulat Jang.[233] Mirzā Bāqar's guards over Saulat Jang then thrust their spears through the coach, which, instead of injuring him, killed one of the two Turānians, who had been placed within the coach, and wounded the other.[234] The generals of Alivardi then removed the curtain of the coach and brought Saulat Jang out of it. They were indulging in jubilations for the miraculous escape of Saulat Jang, when Hāji Muhammad Amīn, somehow or other, got out of the coach, and quickly left the spot by mounting on Mir Muhammad Amīn's horse without his knowledge.[235] Saulat Jang was taken before Alivardi, whose joy at his rescue knew no bounds, and who offered thanks to God by prostrating himself on the ground.[236] After embracing his nephew warmly and presenting him a costly dress, he sent a number of carts under strong guards to bring over his (Saulat Jang's) family from the fort of Barābāṭī. Among the soldiers posted at Barābaṭī by Mirzā Bāqar, some tried to prevent the release of the prisoners but the others opposed them in anticipation of favours at the hands of the victors. Thus the members of Saulat Jang's family were rescued and safely conducted before Alivardi.[237] After a few days, Alivardi sent away Saulat Jang to Murshidābād with all necessary equipments, like elephants, horses, arms, dresses, and other things befitting a high rank,[238] and also a part of his army, retaining with himself only five thousand cavalry and some of his choicest officers.[239] He punished the friends of Mirzā Bāqar and seized all their branded horses (horses marked for being employed in military service).[240]

233 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 503; Riyāz, p. 336.
234 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 503; Yusuf, f. 27; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 40A.
235 Riyāz, p. 336; Salimullah states that the horse belonged to Mir Jāfar Khān.
236 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 504; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 40; Yusuf, f. 27.
237 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 504. 238 *Ibid.* 239 *Ibid.*
240 Riyāz, p. 336.

Having thus recovered Cuttack, Alivardi stayed there for about three months, restoring order and making necessary changes in the administration of Orissā.[241] After appointing Mukhlis Ali Khān, who, as we have already noted, served under Rustam Jang, Deputy Governor of Orissā, he started for Bengal.[242] But on reaching Bhadrak he changed his mind according to the advice of Mustafā Khān, and, after dismissing Mukhlis Ali Khān, appointed in his place Shaikh Māsum, a native of Pānipath and one of his brave generals and intimate friends, to govern Orissā.[243] Durlabhrām, son of Jānkīrām, was now appointed *peshkār* of the Deputy Governor of Orissā.[244]

New administrative arrangements in Orissā

On arriving at Balasore, Alivardi thought it necessary to chastise Rājah Jagadiśvara Bhañja of Mayurbhañj, who had allied himself with Mirzā Bāqar in the recent war and had not yet submitted to his authority.[245] The Rājah was indulging in pleasures in his palace at Hariharpur,[246] when a detachment of Alivardi's army ravaged his territory and soon reduced it to submission, thousands of men and women being made prisoners.[247] Jagadiśvara retreated higher up into the hills and concealed himself there.[248] Thus having subdued the territory of Mayurbhañj, Alivardi resumed his march towards Bengal[249] with his Begam and grandson Sirājuddaulah.[250]

Chastisement of Jagadiśvara Bhañja of Mayurbhañj.

In the meanwhile, Zainuddin was busy consolidating the authority of the new government in Bihār with the assistance of some able officers, such as his *diwān* Rāi Chintāman Dās, who had been formerly his

Zainuddin in Bihār.

241 Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 504-05; Yusuf, f. 27.
242 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 507; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 40A; Yusuf, f. 28.
243 *Ibid.*
244 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 40A.
245 Riyāz, p. 337; Yusuf, f. 28.
246 Riyāz, p. 337.
247 Yusuf, f. 28.
248 Riyāz, p. 337.
249 Yusuf, f. 28.
250 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 507.

uncle's *diwān* at Patna,[251] Hedāyat Ali Khān, father of the historian Ghulām Husain, Mahdi Nisār Khān, a brother of Hedāyat Ali, and Abdul Ali Khān, a nephew of Hedāyat Ali.[252] Rājah Sundar Singh of Tikāri, and the Zamindārs of Narhaṭ and Samāi, Nāmdār Khān, Kāmgār Khān, Ranmast Khān and Sardār Khān, who had been all recently converted to Islam, were, in recognition of their past services to Alivardi, admitted into Zainuddin's personal favour and friendship. Marching in person with a powerful army and a train of artillery, Zainuddin thoroughly suppressed the two turbulent Zamindārs of Shāhābād, Bharat Singh and Udwant Singh Ujjāinā (grandfather of Kunwār Singh of Jagadishpur near Arrah, the leader of the Mutiny in Bihār in 1857-59). So violent was the young Deputy Governor's resentment against them that he did not scruple even to get the able Afghān officer Rohsan Khān Terāhi, the then *faujdār* of Shāhābād, treacherously murdered simply on suspicion of his being in league with them. At the same time, in another part of Bihār, Hedāyat Ali Khān, with the co-operation of Rājah Sundar Singh and Rājah Jaikisan Singh, both Zamindārs of Palāmu, and the Zamindārs of Seres, Cotombā and Sherghāṭi,[253] brought under subjection the powerful Hindu Rājah of Rāmgarh (modern Hāzāribāgh).

[251] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 499. We know from Muzaffarnāmah that Chintāman Dās was a Bengali Kāyastha related to Jānkīrām.

[252] *Ibid*, pp. 506-07.

[253] Sherghāṭi, about 21 miles to the south of the Gayā town.

CHAPTER III

The Marātha Invasions

By the end of the year 1741, Alivardi subdued all his enemies, and established his absolute authority, throughout the length and breadth of Bengal, Bihār, and Orissā. But destiny allowed no respite to the old man. Even before he returned to his capital after expelling Mirzā Bāqar, his most inveterate foe, from Orissā to the Deccan, there appeared from the same quarter a dreadful scourge for him in the shape of the Marātha invasions, which kept him restless for the greater part of his rule.

Genesis of the Marātha invasions.

The origin of the Marātha invasions of Bengal is to be sought in the triumphant Marātha imperialism of the period. The Marāthas now sought, as it were, to wreak vengeance on the moribund Mughal Empire, which had in its heyday opposed their national aspirations, and made a gigantic bid for supremacy over India. The policy of founding a Marātha Empire on the ruins of the Mughal Empire, initiated by the first Peshwā Bālāji Viswanāth, was definitely formulated by his bold and imaginative successor, Bāji Rāo I, when he suggested to his master Shāhu:" Let us strike at the trunk of the withering tree (the Mughal Empire) ; the branches will fall of themselves. Thus should the Marātha flag fly from Krishnā to the Indus."[1] By defeating the jealous opposition of some Marātha generals, notably the *Senāpati* Trimbak Rāo Dhābādé and the *Senā Sāhib Subah* Raghuji Bhonslé, Bāji Rāo was able to establish, before his death on the 28th April, 1740, Marātha supremacy over Gujrāṭ, Mālwā, and Bundelkhaṇd, while the Deccan proper was, to all intents and purposes, ceded to the Marāthas.

[1] Irvine, *Later Mughals*, Vol. II, p. 165,

Raghuji Bhonsle, the practically independent chief of Nāgpur, cherished the ambition of dominating over the affairs at Satārā by bringing under his influence his master Shāhu, who had a soft corner in his heart for him. But this was foiled by the superior talents and ability of Bāji Rāo. Raghuji, therefore, sought an outlet for expansion and plunder to the north-east of his dominion in the Bengal *subah*, which had been endowed by nature with profuse resources and had paid no *chauth* to the Marāthas till then. The political convulsions, then prevailing in that *subah*, presented to him a splendid opportunity for the fulfilment of his ambition. By way of taking vengeance on the arch-traitor Alivardi, the relatives and partisans of the deceased Nawāb Sarfarāz, who had been driven into the Deccan,[2] extended an invitation to Raghuji to invade Bengal. He readily responded to their call. It might be, as some contemporary Muslim writers have suggested,[3] that Raghuji Bhonsle was instigated also by Asaf Jāh Nizām-ul-mulk to advance into Bengal. The Nizām-ul-mulk could thereby divert the attention of the Marāthas of Berār from his own dominion in the south to the north-east, and could at the same time provide against any attempts on the part of Alivardi to extend his sphere of influence in the south.

In Bhāratacandra's *Annadāmaṅgala*, a contemporary Bengali work, we find a somewhat significant version of the origin of the Marātha invasions. These were, as he writes, a sort of Hindu crusades against the Muslim oppressors (Alivardi and his troops), who had plundered the temples of Bhuvaneśvara near Puri and had thus violated the sanctity of Hindu religion.[3a] Another contemporary Bengali writer named Gaṅgārāma, the author of *Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa*, also describes distress and vice in the country, representation of discontent to the

A significant version in contemporary literature.

[2] Bayān, fs. 100-03.

[3] Yusuf, f. 28 ; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 507 ; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 40Bs

[3a] "There is at Satārā the King of the Bargīs, who is a great devotee of mine (Śiva). Do thou appear in his dreams and he will come here to subdue the Yavanas (Muhammadans).

Marāthas, and their agreeing to redress the grievances through divine intervention in the matter.[4] But it is hard to guess how much of historical truth there may be in their statements. Bhāratacandra was a Brāhmaṇ court-poet of the orthodox Brāhmaṇ Zamindār Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā, who had been made a captive by Alivardi on his failure to pay him 12 lacs of rupees demanded as *nazarānā*.[5] So, his statements may have been coloured by a narrow kind of patriotism. Gaṅgārāma does not, however, stand on the same footing. His account is obviously one from the standpoint of the masses of the people (the cultivators, Vaiṣṇavas, and Brāhmaṇas, ordinary men and women of the villages), and he describes quite plainly their first hopes and expectations of relief from the coming of the Marāthas, their subsequent disappointment and resentment, and ultimate veering round of popular opinion in favour of the endangered Muslim Government of Bengal. Contemporary Muslim historians seem to have no knowledge of the state of Hindu feeling described above ; they suspected intrigues but were inclined to throw the whole blame on other Muslims in India (*e.g.*, partisans of Sarfarāz Khān ; discontented officials ; or the Nizām-ul-mulk). Probably they were partly right, and it was also natural that the Muslim writers of Bengal should be largely out of touch with the undercurrents of discontent amongst Hindu subjects.

First Marātha invasion, 1742.

Raghuji Bhonsle commissioned his prime minister, Bhāskar Rām, to the task of invading Bengal and collecting *chauth* from the province.[6] Bhāskar marched unopposed through Orissā with twenty

On hearing this Nandī revealed everything to the King of the Bargīs in his dream, which enraged him highly. So Raghurājah sent Bhāskar Pandit to Bengal."—Bhāratacandra, p. 5.

[4] "Śiva called Nandī before him and said, 'Proceed to the city of the South (the Deccan). There is a king of the name of Shāhu. Put yourself within his body. The world is too much afflicted with sin. See that he may send his men to destroy the sinners.' On hearing this, Nandī proceeded quickly and appeared before Shāhurājah."—Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 37-44.

[5] Bhāratacandra, p. 5.

[6] Yusuf, f. 28 ; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 507.

three commanders,[7] and at the head of twenty thousand cavalry,[8] overpowered its Deputy Governor, Shaikh Māsum Khān, and made his *peshkār* Durlabhrām a captive.[9] Then he proceeded through Pachet (modern Rānīganj and the surrounding districts).[10]

On his way back from Orissā, Alivardi got a report of the Marātha advance at Jaygarh [11] near Midnāpur, from one of the revenue-collectors of that quarter.[12] He did not at first give much credence to it,[13] and conducted his return journey to Murshidābād in a leisurely manner in the confidence that an external invader could not enter Bengal except through the well-known route lying across the Rājmahal hills.[14] But he was soon disillusioned, when on reaching Sahkrā near Mubarak Manzil [15] he was informed that the Marāthas having already passed through Pachet were about to fall on Burdwān.[16] He could not afford to ignore the report any longer.

After a forced march of one whole day and night, Alivardi reached Burdwān on the 15th April, 1742 [17] and encamped on the

[7] Gaṅgārāma mentions twenty-two names (a 23rd name is perhaps indicated by the lacuna) : Dhāmdharmā, Hirāman Kāsī, Gangāji Amḍā, Simanta Josi, Bālāji, Sivāji Kohaḍā, Sambhuji, Kesaji Amoḍā, Kesāri Singh, Mohan Singh, Bālā Rāo, Śiś Rao, Arsis Paṇḍit, Semanta Sehaḍā, Hirāman Maṇḍit, Mohan Rāya, Pīt Rāya, Śiśo Paṇḍit, Sivāji, Samāji, Firaṅga Rāya, Suntan Khān.—Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 212-30. It should be noted that the last name is of a Muhammadan noble. Firaṅga Rāya might refer to some European adventurer in Marātha military service.

[8] Yusuf, f. 28. According to Ghulām Husain 25,000, which rumour swelled to 40,000 (Siyar, Vol. II, p. 507) ; 60,000 according to Riyāz, p. 338 and Salīmullah, f 115B ; 80,000 according to Scrafton (Indostan, p. 40) ; 50,000 according to Dow (Hindustan, Vol. II, p. 307) ; 40,000 according to Gaṅgārāma. Grant-Duff (Vol. II, p. 426) estimates the number as 10,000 or 12,000.

[9] Muzaffarnāmah, f. 41a.

[10] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 507 ; Yusuf, f. 29.

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 507.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] Yusuf, f. 29.

[15] Modern Sāhin-bandī in the Arāmbāgh subdivision of the Hughli district. The *Prābasī* Magazine, *Aṣāṛh*, 1338, p. 382.

[16] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 507 ; Yusuf, f. 29. Gaṅgārāma (lines 19-20) writes that he passed by Goālābhum keeping Birbhum to the left. His Goālābhum evidently refers to Pachet.

[17] Letter to Court, 31st July, 1742.

embankment of a tank called Rāṇīdīghi [18] in the outskirts of the city. He had with him only 3,000 to 4,000 cavalry and 4,000 to 5,000 musketeers, as after the recovery of Orissā he had sent away the major part of his troops to Murshidābād with Saulat Jang.[19]

Skirmishes at Burdwān.

To his utter surprise, the Marāthas surrounded his camp unawares at dead of night,[20] looted his baggage, captured some of his horses, elephants, and camels, and cut off his food supplies.[21] Avoiding a pitched battle, the Marāthas only took recourse to skirmishes during the day and retired to their camp at Burdwān each evening.[22] Bhāskar demanded ten lacs of rupees as a price for his return, which was refused by Alivardi.[23] Of the twenty-four generals of the Marāthas, Bhāskar remained with fourteen hemming in the Nawāb's troops, and the remaining ten went out to plunder the villages in different quarters.[24] This was not all. The Marāthas,

The Nawāb's troops at Burdwān reduced to a pitiable situation.

writes the author of Riyāz, "set fire to granaries and spared no vestige of fertility, and when the stores and granaries of Burdwān were exhausted, and the supply of imported grains was also completely cut off, to avert death by starvation, human beings ate plantain-roots, whilst animals were fed with the leaves of trees. Even these gradually ceased to be available. For breakfasts and suppers nothing except the discs of the sun and the moon feasted their eyes." [25] We get almost similar descriptions of the

[18] Nohārāṣṭrāpurāṇa, lines 11-12. In the Siyar as well as in contemporary literature we meet with the expression *Rāṇīdīghi* in connection with Burdwān, Patna and Murshidābād. Probably these refer to tanks excavated under the orders of some queens, or excavated by others in commemoration of their name or memory.

[19] Yusuf, f. 29; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 507.

[20] Muzaffarnāmah, f. 41a; Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 21-24.

[21] Riyāz, p. 338.

[22] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 508; Yusuf, f. 30.

[23] *Ibid*; Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 149-200.

[24] *Ibid*, lines 213-30; Wafā, f. 16B

[25] Riyāz, p. 340.

situation also in the works of Wafā[26] and Salimullah.[27] Gaṅgā-rāma too writes: "Nobody came out for fear of the Bargīs and nowhere were food-articles available. All men in the army, whether high or low, had to subsist on boiled plantain-roots. The extremities were great; not to speak of others, even the Nawāb had to partake of these."[28]

About a week[29] had elapsed in this way, when Alivardi considered it inadvisable to remain stationary in his camp almost at the mercy of his enemies without necessary food-articles.[30] He decided to march one night swiftly through the circle of Marātha cavalry with only a selected number of his troops, and to meet them in a pitched battle which they had been so long avoiding.[31] To make his army mobile, he ordered the camp-followers and non-fighters to remain in the camp with carts, tents, and other things.[32] But it did not so happen. No sooner had he gone out of his camp with his army in a morning of May, 1742,[33] than those left behind, apprehending attacks from the Marāthas in their defenceless condition, followed close upon it and thus made it as unwieldy as before.[34]

Alivardi marched out of Burdwān; his troubles on the way.

Finding the Bengal troops thus encumbered, the Marāthas attacked them from all sides, and a furious fighting ensued at a place lying at a distance of about 12 miles from the Burdwān city.[35] Towards the evening, the Nawāb found to his surprise that his Afghān generals had become rather indifferent and had

26 Wafā, f. 16.

27 Salimullah, fs. 117A-117B.

28 Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 230-56.

29 Ten days according to Wafā, f. 15B; Seven days according to Gaṅgārāma, *op. cit.*, lines 229-30.

30 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 508.

31 Yusuf, f. 31.

32 *Ibid.*

33 Wafā, f. 16A.

34 Yusuf, f. 31; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 508.

35 *Ibid.*

lagged behind without fighting seriously with the enemies.[36] The Afghāns had been, in fact, discontented with him for several reasons.[37] The Marāthas plundered all his provisions, tents, and baggage, except three or four palanquins and his own tent.[38] To add to his troubles, he had to halt in a paddy-field, which had become muddy owing to excessive rainfall.[39] Thus he passed the whole night in great distress.[40]

Beset with enemies and having no food or shelter, Alivardi found himself in an extremely critical situation; but with his usual fortitude, he decided to leave no means unassayed to extricate himself from it.[41]

Alivardi's overtures for peace.

Probably with a view to gaining time for replenishment of his resources, he opened negotiations for peace the next morning,[42] by sending to the Marāthas an envoy, named Mir Khairullah Khān, a native of the Deccan, then employed as the Paymaster of the Burdwān Rājah's troops.[43] He was entrusted, as if by that Rājah himself, with a message requesting Bhāskar to effect a compromise with the Nawāb of Bengal.[44] But Bhāskar replied haughtily that he could accept this proposal and allow the Nawāb to return to his capital if the latter paid him one crore of rupees and surrendered to him all his elephants.[45]

Bhāskar's exorbitant demands.

Jānkirām, a fast friend and prominent officer of Alivardi, advised him to satisfy the demands of the Marāthas[46] in view of

36 *Ibid.*
37 *Ibid.*
38 *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 31.
39 *Ibid.*
40 *Ibid.*
41 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 509.
42 Yusuf, f. 31.
43 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 509.
44 *Ibid.*
45 *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 31.
46 *Ibid.*

the distressed condition of his army at that time. But Alivardi made up his mind to strike once more, and replied that he would rather distribute ten lacs of rupees among his own men than add to the strength of his enemies by paying anything to them.[47] Karam Ali[48] states that Alivardi, rather perplexed by difficulties, at first felt inclined to acquiesce in the demands of the Marāthas but soon changed his mind when the latter wanted his favourite grandson Sirājuddaulah to become a hostage for the payment of the money, and having invoked divine assistance, thus addressed his generals: "Why should I not pay unto you as rewards what I am going to offer to the Marāthas?" Nex the considered it necessary to win over the discontented Afghāns, who formed the life and soul of his army. With this view he went the same night to Mustafā Khān's tent with no one in his company except his little grandson Sirājuddaulah and made the following pathetic appeal: "Are you dissatisfied with me on any account? Here I am before you with only Sirājuddaulah, who is dearer to me than my own self. Despatch us immediately. Do your business at one stroke, and remove all your doubts at once. But if some remembrance of a friendship of long standing, and some gratitude for benefits received, have yet a place in your heart, and you can afford to forgive some faults of mine that are now past; if you are inclined to stand by me in this desperate moment, then renew your engagements with me, and do swear anew that you shall not forsake me. This is the only way to set my mind at rest to enable me to think of what should be done with the Marāthas, as I am firmly resolved to leave nothing unattempted rather than submit."[49] This produced the desired effect on the minds of Mustafa Khān and his fellow commanders, like Shamshir Khān, Umar Khān, Sardār Khān,

Alivardi resolved to fight with the Marāthas.

Alivardi visits Mustafā Khān's tent and wins back the allegiance of the Afghāns.

47 *Ibid.*

48 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 41a

49 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 510.

Rahaun Khān, and others, all of whom promised to fight for the Nawāb with renewed vigour.[50]

Thus encouraged, Alivardi marched the next morning[51] towards Kāṭwah, 35 miles to the north-east of Burdwān, with his army much reduced in numerical strength (two or three thousand cavalry, five or six thousand infantry, and a few elephants).[52] On reaching Nikulsarāi[53] his soldiers endeavoured to oppose the Marāthas who had pursued them all the way. A desperate fighting took place towards the evening and continued the whole night,[54] in course of which one of Alivardi's brave generals, named Musāhib Khān Mohmand, son of Umar Khān, fell dead.[55] The Marāthas placed a gun, that they had captured during their first plunder of Alivardi's camp, at the top of a tree and discharged shots towards his troops.[56] At dawn, Mānikcānd (*diwān* of the Rājah of Burdwān), who had accompanied Alivardi's army, fled out of fear to Burdwān. The Marāthas rushed forward to the centre of Alivardi's army and captured Mir Habib,[57] who henceforth turned out to be their devoted friend and helped them in various ways. But at this critical moment, the valour of some generals of Alivardi, like Hāider Āli Khān,

Alivardi fights his way to Kāṭwah.

50 *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 32.

51 *Ibid*. 52 *Ibid*, f. 34.

53 Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 273-77. Modern Negun, a station on the Burdwān-Kāṭwah Light Railway, situated at a distance of 20 miles from the Burdwān Junction Railway Station and 14 miles from Kāṭwah.

54 Yusuf, f. 32; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 511; Wafā, f. 16B.

55 Mahārāṣṭrapurāna, lines 273-77.

56 Yusuf, f. 32; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 510.

57 *Ibid* Details of Mir Habib's early career have been narrated by Yusuf (f. 33) and the author of Riyāz (p. 299). He emigrated to Hugli from Shirāz in Persia in the time of Nawāb Murshid Quli Jā'far Khān and began to earn his living there by retailing the wares of Mughal merchants. Through his command over Persian language, and his tact and wit, he soon made himself prominent in the service of Murshid Quli Rustam Jang during his Deputy Governorship of Dacca. He rendered valuable services to his master in different branches of administration and was elevated to a high rank. After the death of Sarfarāz, he entered into the service of Nawāb Alivardi through the recommendation of Nawāzish Muhammad, but he could never be sincere in his attachment to the new Nawāb.

Superintendent of his artillery, Mir Jāfar Khān, Mustafā Khān, Shamshir Khān, Umar Khān, Sardār Khān, and Raham Khān, saved his army from a fatal disaster. They gallantly charged their enemies and killed many of them,[58] which frightened the rest so much that they dissolved the cordon that they had formed round the Nawāb's army and attacked only one flank of it.[59] This afforded the Bengal army respite to form itself into a compact body and to resume its march towards Kāṭwah.[60] But it had to fight all the way with the Marāthas.

Sufferings of Alivardi's army.

The sufferings of the Bengal troops, in their march from Burdwān to Kāṭwah, knew no bounds. Yusuf Ali, who was at that time present in the company of Alivardi, has left a graphic account[61] of this troublesome march. He writes that whenever the Nawāb's soldiers halted on the way, the Marāthas also halted around them keeping themselves at a safe distance from the range of their swivel guns and at the same time sending out scouring parties to burn and plunder the villages situated within ten or twelve miles on either side of the road. Every night, all men in the Nawāb's army, from a general to an ordinary soldier, sat with no canopy overhead and with no carpets or bedsteads below except the ground. Articles of food became scarce; those who had some wealth or position could barely get one meal during twenty-four hours, and the common people had to stuff their stomachs with roots of plantain-trees or grass. On the first day of the march Yusuf Ali himself could procure only three quarts of a seer of

[58] Yusuf, f. 33; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 511.

[59] *Ibid.*

[60] *Ibid.*

[61] fs. 34-35. It should be noted here that Ghulām Husain, the author of Siyar, has based his account of the Marātha invasions of Bengal on Yusuf Ali's work. Referring to the march of the Bengal troops from Burdwān to Kāṭwah, Holwell remarks: "If we consider the retreat of the veterans . . . in all its circumstances it will appear as amazing an effort of human bravery as the history of any age or people chronicled, and we think it merits as much being recorded and transmitted to posterity as that of the celebrated Athenian general and historian."—Interesting Historical Events, p. 119.

'*khichery*' (boiled rice mixed with pulse), which he shared with seven others; on the next day, they had to live on only seven pieces of '*Shakar-perā*,' a kind of confectionary; and on the third day they got nothing but half a seer of carrion. Thus practically starved for three days, the Bengal army fought its way through the ranks of the Marāthas and reached Kāṭwah on the fourth day of its march. But the light Marātha cavalry had already entered that city, plundered its farms and granaries, and burnt such grains as they could not carry away. [62] The famished soldiers of Alivardi had to put down their acute hunger with half-burnt grains. [63] They soon got relief from Murshidābād. In response to Alivardi's request, Hāji Ahmad and Shahāmat Jang sent to him Saulat Jang with provisions and some other necessary things. [64]

Mir Habib with a body of Marāthas plundered the city of Murshidābād.

The Nawāb's troops being thus reinforced and the rainy season having set in, Bhāskar thought of returning to his own country through Birbhum. But this was opposed by Mir Habib (now in Marātha service), who pointed out to him that the wealth of Jagat Seth and others in the defenceless [65] city of Murshidābād could be easily plundered by the Marāthas, if they fell upon it during Alivardi's absence. [66] Bhāskar readily concurred in this proposal, and Mir Habib marched from Kāṭwah towards Murshidābād with a few thousand Marātha horsemen. [67] Early in the morning of the 6th May, 1742, [68] he reached Dāhāpāḍā, opposite Murshidābād, and burnt its *bāzār*, called Ganj Muhammad Khān. Hāji Ahmad, Shahāmat Jang, and Husain Quli,

[62] Yusuf, f. 34; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 512; Riyāz, p. 341; Salimullah, f. 118 A.

[63] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 512; Yusuf, f. 34.

[64] *Ibid*, f. 35; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 513; Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 279-82; Salimullah, f. 118A.

[65] Yusuf, f. 35.

[66] *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 513; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 41b; Wafā, f. 17.

[67] Yusuf, f. 35; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 513. Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes (Fall, Vol. I, p. 81) that Mir Habib marched with 700 horsemen.

[68] Letter to Court, 31st July, 1742, para. 7.

who had come from Dacca to Murshidābād on a private piece of business, tried to prevent him from crossing the river Bhāgirathī.[69] But he baffled all opposition, and crossing the river at the ferry of Hājiganj,[70] entered the city of Murshidābād. He went into his house and took away his brother Mir Sharif in his company,[71] but could not bring out his wife or children owing to the opposition offered by Hāji Ahmad, Ataullah Khān, and Ali Jawād Khan, a general of Alivardi.[72] He, however, soon raided the house of Jagat Seth Fatehcānd and carried away therefrom about three lacs of rupees in cash and a quantity of other goods in kind.[73] Having plundered other quarters of the city[74] and captured Murād Ali Khān, a son-in-law of Sarfarāz Khān, Durlabhrām, and Mir Shujāuddin, Superintendent of the '*Bajutarah* (*Pachotrā*) *Sair*' duties (customs), the Marāthas went over to the west bank of the Bhāgīrathī and encamped for the night at Tritconah,[75] intending to plunder the city of Murshidābād again on the following day.[76] The inhabitants of that city passed that fateful night in great dismay.[77] Several families of bankers and other people ran away with their bag and baggage to places like Bhagwāngolā[78] and Māldah.[79] The Marāthas "fed their horses and cattle with mulberry plantations, and thereby irreparably injured the

Consternation in the city of Murshidābād.

69 Wafā, fs. 19A-19B.

70 Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, line 403; Wafā (f. 10B) writes that they crossed the river at Mahemānpur.

71 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 513.

72 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 41B; Wafā, f. 19B; Riyāz, p. 341.

73 Yusuf, f. 35; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 42 A.

74 Yusuf, f. 35; Letter to Court, dated 31st July, 1742, para. 7; Wafā, f. 19 B.

75 Riyāz, p. 341. Tritconah or Kritkohah is about three miles from Murshidābād. It is a place of great antiquity and has an old temple of a gooddess called Kirīṭeśvarī.

76 Salimulla, f. 1118 B. Gaṅgārāma writes that while leaving the city of Murshidābād the *Bargīs* scattered behind themselves two or three thousand rupees to keep back the intending pursuers. Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines, 403-10.

77 Wafā, f. 18 A.

78 About eight miles north-east of the Murshidābād city.

79 Wafā, f. 18 A.

silk manufacture."[80] The English, the Dutch, and the French left their factories at Cāssimbāzār on the 6th May, and did not return before the Nawāb's victory at Kāṭwah.[81]

On hearing of the movements of the Marāthas, Alivardi started at once from Kāṭwah, and marching day and night[82] with all possible speed, in the midst of rain and thunder,[83] reached the city of Murshidābād towards the morning of the 7th May.[84] Mir Habib and his party thereupon retreated towards Kāṭwah plundering and burning the villages they passed through on their way.[85]

Alivardi's march from Kāṭwah to Murshidābād and retreat of the Marāthas.

From Kāṭwah the Marāthas started for their home in order to avoid the heavy rains of Bengal. But Mir Habib overtook them when they were passing through Birbhum. By reproaching them for their cowardly retreat, and at the same time alluring them with high prospects of immense plunders, he persuaded them to come back to Kāṭwah.[86] They soon brought Kāṭwah, Dñāihāṭ, and Bhowsingberā[87] under their control, and Mir Habib tried to establish their authority also in certain other parts of West Bengal. He openend negotiatons with the Zamindārs and began to realise customs and rents from the people by sending his agents to different quarters.[88]

Mir Habib tried to establish Marātha sway over certain parts of West Bengal.

Mir Habib next thought of taking possession of the rich town of Hugli, which was, both politically and commercially, of great importance. He had spent his early life there and had many

Capture of the Hugli fort by the Marāthas.

80 Holwell, I. H. E., p. 121.
81 Letter to Court, 8th January, 1743, para. 100.
82 Riyāz, p. 343; Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 411-15.
83 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 42a.
84 Yusuf, f. 36.
85 Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 415-16; Yusuf, f. 36.
86 *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 514.
87 Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 415-26.
88 *Ibid*, lines 427-30; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 514; Holwell, I. H. E., p. 126.

relatives and friends among its citizens.[89] He formed a conspiracy with some of them, notably the two rich merchants, Mir Abul Hasan and Mir Abul Kāsim, who were on intimate terms with Muhammad Yār Khān, Alivardi's half-brother and Governor of Hugli,[90] to capture the Hugli fort. The defence of the fort was sadly neglected by the Nawāb's *faujdār*, Muhammad Rāzā Khān, who being a debauchee spent his nights in hard drinking and merriment with dancing girls.[91] This gave an opportunity to the conspirators. On an appointed night Mir Habib with 2,000 Marāthas under Śiś Rāo appeared before the gate of the fort, when Muhammad Rāzā Khān "arranging a feast of revelry was quite absorbed in watching the dancing of pretty women."[92] Mir Abul Hasan, who enjoyed his confidence, then reported to him, "Mir Habib has come alone to interview you and is waiting at the gate of the fort." Under the influence of liquor, Muhammad Rāzā ordered the gate of the fort to be opened and to admit Mir Habib. The Marāthas then rushed inside the fort, brought it under their control, and put the officers of the Nawāb in chains.[93] Many of the residents of Hugli fled during that night to Chinsurā and other neighbouring places, and some placed themselves under the protection of the Dutch and the French.

Śiś Rāo as Governor of Hugli.

The next morning Śiś Rāo was installed as the Marātha Governor of Hugli. Being kind and polite, he received compliments from some of its citizens, whom he assured of peace and protection.[94] He appointed *kāzis* and *muhtāsibs*, made Mir Abul Husan his *faujdār* and ordered the Zamindārs to collect revenue.[95] Henceforth, Kāṭwah became the headquarters of the Marāthas in Bengal,

89 Riyāz, p. 342.
90 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 514.
91 Riyāz, pp. 342-43.
92 *Ibid.*
93 *Ibid.*
94 Siyār, Vol. II, p. 514; Riyāz, p. 343; Yusuf, f. 36.
95 Riyāz, p. 343.

and Mir Habib became their principal adviser. Some of the Zamindārs of West Bengal sent their agents to Mir Habib and obtained immunity of their tracts from plunder by paying him large sums. [96]

Attempt of the Marāthas to go beyond the Hugli River.

The movements of the Marāthas caused great anxiety for the English in Calcutta. The Council in Calcutta kept itself "constantly advised of every material Motion of either party during the trouble (caused by the Marātha invasion) to guide them." [97] It wrote to the Court of Directors on the 31st July, 1742: "On the Morattoes coming began to put Fort William into the best posture of defence. A strong detachment (under Captain Holcombe) sent to Cassimbazar and sent for Mr. Forriestie a good Engineer from Patna to form a plan for a Fortification. Subordinates (subordinate factories) ordered to put into a state of security, some bastions are erected at Cassimbazar." The Marāthas tried even to advance beyond the Hugli river, and a detachment of them went up to the Tana's fort. [98] But they could not proceed further due to the timely precautions of the Council in Calcutta. The Company's ship Tygries "was stationed as a guardship of Perrin's Garden [98a] with a sloop to prevent Morattoes (from) crossing the river (Hugli)." [99]

Mir Habib intended to proceed towards Dacca through the Sunderbans, but Alivardi prevented it by timely sending back there Husain Quli Khān to make proper arrangements for the defence of that city. [100] The English also took necessary precautions to defend their factory there. The Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on the 8th January, 1743:

[96] *Ibid*; Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 427-30.

[97] Letter to Court, 8th January, 1743, para. 81.

[98] Letter to Court, 30th October, 1742, para. 6. Tana's fort was situated on the right bank of the Hugli below Calcutta.

[98a] At the north-western space of the Bāghbāzār.

[99] Letter to Court, 8th January, 1743, para. 9.

[100] Wafā, f. 21B.

" Dacca frequently alarmed of Moratoes (Marāthas) Intentions to visit those parts, supplied them (men in the Dacca factory) with stores as desired but could send them no men." [101]

The cessation of active fighting during the rainy season of 1742 gave the Marāthas a splendid opportunity to carry on their ravages over Burdwān, Midnāpur, and Orissā as far as Bālāsore.[102] Gaṅgārāma has mentioned the names of the important places in the districts of Burdwān, Nadiā, Birbhum, Murshidābād, Bāṅkurā, and Midnāpur, that were affected by the Marātha ravages. According to him, the Marāthas first plundered and burnt Candrakonā, Midnāpur, Dignagara, Khirpāi, Nimgāchi, Seḍgā, Simailā, Caṇḍīpura, Śyāmpura, Ānāila, the Burdwan city, and some villages round it, and next extended their ravages over Kātharā, Sarāi, Dāmdvai, Jadupura, Bhātchāla, Mirzāpura, Cāndrā, Palāśī, Baiñcī, Beḍā, Samudragaḍa, Jānnagara, Nadiā, Kādāi, Baithāna, Caḍāila, Siṅgi, Vāskā, Ghoḍānās, Mastaila, Goṭpāḍā, Jugudea, Pāṭalī, Ātāihāṭ, Pātāihāṭ, Dñāihāṭ, Berābhausing (Bhowsingberā), and Vikihāṭ.[103] Then after plundering the Dutch factories at Kāgrāma [104] and Mowgrāma [105] they reached Kāndī. [106] From Kāndī they left for Birbhum, plundered the greater part of that district, and halted for some time at Āmadaharā [107] and Maheśpura.[107a] After that they went to Vanaviṣṇupura, [108] but could not commit any ravages there apparently owing to a spirited defence by a local force, which

Marātha ravages and control over west Bengal and Orissā.

101 Para. 101.

102 Yusuf, f. 36; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 514; Salimullah, f. 120B.

103 These villages are situated on both sides of the Kāṭwah-Dñāihāṭ road in the Kāṭwah subdivision of the Burdwān district.

104 In the Murshidābād district.

105 In the Burdwān district.

106 A subdivisional town in the Murshidābād district.

107 Within the jurisdiction of the Nānnur police station in the Birbhum district.

107a In the Pākur subdivision of the district of Santal Parganas.

108 In the Bāṅkurā district.

used artillery and claimed divine assistance.[109] Next they crossed the rivulet Vāvlā[110] and came to Māṅganpāḍā, Sāṭui, and Kāmnagara, whence they rushed towards Mahātā, Caurī-gāchā, Kāthāliā, and Āñdhārmānika through Rāṅgāmāṭī, and reached Dāhāpāḍā after passing through Goāljāna, Budhnipāḍā, and Neālispāḍā.[111] In course of two or three months, Orissā, Midnāpur, Burdwān, a part of the Rājsāhī zamindāri, Birbhum, and Rājmahal, in short, the whole of West Bengal and a portion of Orissā fell under Marātha control ; only the city of Murshidābād and North and East Bengal remained under Alivardi's authority.[112]

Pitiable condition of the people in the ravaged areas.

The condition of the people in the ravaged areas became serious and pitiable under wanton cruelties perpetrated by the Marāthas. Gaṅgārāma[113] has left a graphic account of the miseries of these people : "The Brāhmaṇs and the Paṇḍits ran away with their books, the '*Soṇār beniās*' (goldsmiths) with their weights and measures, the '*Gandha-vaṇiks*' (grocers, druggists, and perfumers) and the '*Kñasārīs*' (bell-metal-workers) after closing their shops, the blacksmiths and the potters with their implements, the fishermen with their nets and ropes, and the '*Śaṅkha-vaṇiks*' (conch-dealers) with their own articles. The *Kāyasthas* and the *Vaidyas* followed suit. The gentle ladies, who had never walked publicly on foot, went out with bag and baggage on their heads. The *Kṣetrīs* and the Rajputs fled away leaving their swords behind; the *Kaivartas* and the agriculturists did the same with their ploughs and with paddy-seeds on the back of their oxen. The *Shaikhs*, the Sayyids, the Mughals and the Pāṭhāns ran out

[109] "Esava dekhiā Bargī Palāiā jāya l
Madanmohan bhume nāme emana samaya ll
Āpana hāte palitā laiyā kāmānete dila l
Bargī palāila tādera hāti mare gela ll "
Madanmohan Vandanā, Typical Selections, Part II, pp. 1219-21.

[110] In the Murshidābād district, flowing about ¼ of a mile west of Bāzārsāhu Railway Station (Bandel-Barharwah Branch) and falling into the Bhāgīrathī near Kalyāṇpur, a village lying 1½ miles to the south-east of Mowgrāma.

[111] Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 356-400.

[112] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 514 ; Yusuf, fs. 36-37 ; Riyāz, p. 344.

[113] Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 383-86.

of their villages; and pregnant women, who could not walk long, gave birth to children on the way . . . . The poor people ran away with their humble clothes, the old walked out with their sticks, and the *Chñāis* and the *Dhānuks* [114] went out with goats . . . Suddenly the Bargīs surrounded these run-away people in the field and plundered their gold and silver to the exclusion of everything else. They cut off the hands of some, noses and ears of others, and killed many. They even ravished beautiful women, entered into the villages, and set fire to the houses. Again and again they demanded money of the people and poured water into the noses of some, who failed to supply them with it, drowned others in tanks, and instantly put many of them to death." Gaṅgārāma's statement is well corroborated by three other contemporary writers like Vāṇeśvara Vidyālaṅkāra,[115] the court-paṇḍit of the Rājah of Burdwan, Salimullah, and Ghulām Husain Salim. The last writer remarks: "Those freebooters drowned in the rivers a large number of the people, after cutting off their ears, noses, and hands. Tying sacks of dirt to the mouths of others, they mangled and burnt them with indescribable tortures. Thus they desolated and dishonoured the family and children of a whole world." [116] Holwell also gives a similar account of Marātha oppression: ". . . they detached a strong body to Bukchs Bunder [117] which they attacked, took, and plundered; perpetrating everywhere the most execrable cruelties that revenge and inhumanity could dictate, cutting off the ears, noses and hands, of many of the inhabitants whom they suspected of concealing their wealth, or valuable movables, sometimes carrying their barbarity so far as cutting off the breasts of women on the same pretence,

114 A class of semi-civilised people living in many parts of the Murshidābād district. They have now taken to agriculture and live mostly on it.

115 Vaṅgiya Sāhitya Pariṣat Patrikā, Part 35.

116 Riyāz, p. 344.

117 Bakhsh-bandar—Customs-house or port at Hugli.

neither sex nor age proving any security against these enraged barbarians." [118]

Some people of West Bengal saved their honour and wealth by fleeing away to Eastern and Northern Bengal (Dacca, Māldah, and Rāmpur Boāliā), where they settled permanently.[119] Even Shahāmat Jang crossed over the Ganges to a place near Godāgārī (in the modern Rājsāhī district) with his own and the Nawāb's family, and some furniture and effects. After a short stay at that place, which since then came to be called Bhāgnagar,[120] he returned to Murshidābād with some of his female favourites and the articles belonging to Alivardi.[121] Mahārājah Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā also left Kṛṣṇanagar for the time being and lived at a place on the bank of the river Icchāmatī, at a distance of 12 miles from Kṛṣṇanagar, and the mother of Rājah Tilakcandrā Rāya of Burdwān fled from Burdwān to Mulājor, which she had taken on lease from Kṛṣṇacandra. [122] Many people went over to Calcutta also, where they implored the protection of the English, who obtained the Nawāb's permission to dig up an entrenchment round their territory. [123] This led to the construction of what came to be known later on as the Marātha Ditch.

Many of them fled to Eastern and Northern Bengal.

During the rainy season Alivardi, as has been already noted, suspended active operations against the Marāthas with his

[118] I. H. E., p. 135. It appears from what Gaṅgārāma and others say about the beastly treatment of womenfolk by the Marātha armies that they had degenerated absolutely below the standard aimed at by the Hindu revivalist Śivāji.

[119] Yusuf, f. 37; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 514; Riyāz, p. 343; Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 352-56; Holwell, I. H. E., pp. 123 24. This is an instance from a very recent period of the general movement of the Lower-Gangetic peoples from west to east, under pressure of invasions or political disruption. In this way ancient Magadhāns and Mithilāns came into West and East Bengal, and in this way too men of these parts passed into the East Indies or the Greater India beyond the seas.

[120] Yusuf, f. 37.

[121] *Ibid.*

[122] Introduction to the Works of Bhāratacandra, New Victoria Press Publication.

[123] Orme, Indostan, Vol. II, p. 45.

fatigued troops.[124] He encamped at Amānīgañj and Tārakpur in the suburbs of the Murshidābād city,[125] and devoted himself to strengthening his army for a fresh conflict with the Marāthas after the expiry of the rains.[126] His artillery was reorganised, some war-elephants were trained to march in front of his elephant,[127] a strong flotilla was prepared by recruiting boats from Dacca, Māldah, and Rājmahal,[128] and ten lacs of rupees were distributed among the soldiers by way of pleasing them.[128a] He had also appealed to the Delhi Emperor and written to his deputies at Patna[129] and Purneah[130] to help him against the Marāthas. At the time when Zainuddin received his uncle's letter he was in a rather embarrassed situation, as he had very lately returned from his expedition against the Bhojpur zamindārs, and his troops had not received their arrears of pay. But Hedāyat Ali Khān promised to clear off the arrear dues of the troops and to undertake the charge of his government during his absence, whereupon he marched for Murshidābād with Mahdi Nisār Khān and Abdul Ali Khān, paternal uncle and maternal grand-uncle respectively of the historian Ghulām Husain, at the head of 5,000 cavalry and about 6,000 or 7,000 infantry.[131] Saif[132] Khān also came from Purneah with 5,000 soldiers.

Alivardi's preparations during the rainy season.

Zainuddin came from Patna and Saif Khān from Purneah to help the Nawāb against the Mahāthas.

124 Yusuf, f. 36.

125 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 514.

126 *Ibid.*

127 *Ibid*, p. 516.

128 Riyāz, p. 344. This indicates easy direct waterways between the districts of East and West Bengal for that time.

128a Yusuf, f. 37; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 516.

129 *Ibid*, p. 515. Wafā (f. 22B) states that due to rains Zainuddin had to spend one month and a half in coming from Patna to Murshidābād, though usually 15 days were required for such a journey.

130 Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 501-02.

131 Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 515-16. Gaṅgārāma also gives the number of his cavalry and infantry as twelve thousand.—Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, line 594.

132 Not Sayeed Ahmad as Gaṅgārāma wrongly writes. Saif Khān was Deputy Governor of Purneah till his death in December, 1748 (Siyar, Vol. II, p. 515).

On his arrival at Murshidābād, Zainuddin urged on the necessity of attacking the Marāthas before the expiry of the rainy season, and, in spite of the Nawāb's protest, succeeded in carrying his point.[133] The Nawāb then left the suburbs of Murshidābād with his two nephews, his kinsman Abdul Ali Khān, and an efficient and well-organised body of troops, while the ground was yet miry and under water in some places.[134] In the meanwhile, Bhāskar was celebrating the Durgā Pujā festival at Dñāibāṭ (about five miles south-east of Kāṭwah) by exacting contributions from some of the zamindārs of West Bengal.[135] The Nawāb made a surprise attack on him during the small hours of the morning on the third day of the festival, the 27th September, 1742.[136] The Marāthas, thereupon, fled away towards Kāṭwah leaving behind a portion of their bag and baggage.[137]

After a few days' march the Nawāb reached a certain place on the east bank of the river Bhāgīrathī, opposite Kāṭwah Here a smaller river, the Ajay, runs into the Bhāgīrathī from the west. The main body of the Marāthas was encamped facing the Ajay on the west bank of the Bhāgīrathī, and a party of them was kept ready with artillery in a sloop in the Bhāgīrathī by the side of Kāṭwah.[138] All of them were on the alert, and the Nawāb could not dislodge them from their strong position though he fired upon them across the Bhāgīrathī for eight days.[139] But the western flank of the Marātha army was not

The Nawāb reached the east bank of the Bhāgīrathī near Kāṭwah.

133 Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 507-16.
134 Yusuf, f. 37; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 517.
135 Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 559-78; Wafā, f. 23B.
136 Sarkar, *Fall*, Vol. I, p. 90; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 517.
137 Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 559-64.
138 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 517.
139 *Ibid*,

well-protected, and so the Nawāb thought of attacking this flank by secretly crossing both the Bhāgīrathī and the Ajay.[140] For a few miles above Kāṭwah, both the banks of the Bhāgīrathī were free from Marātha control. It was, therefore, possible for the Nawāb to get a temporary bridge of boats constructed across the Bhāgīrathī at Uddhāraṇpur,[141] and to cross it with his army to the north bank of the Ajay. The boats being then let down the stream of the Bhāgīrathī, one or two at a time, reached the mouth of the Ajay[142] at about a mile above the Marātha camp.[143] The Nawāb utilised these to get a bridge built across the Ajay before daybreak with a view to crossing that stream silently, evading the attention of the Marāthas.[144] But when his army began crossing it, one or two boats in the middle of the bridge gave way causing the death of 1,500 of his soldiers.[145] The bridge was, however, quickly repaired, and before the earliest light of dawn streaked the eastern horizon, about 3,000 of the Bengal troops had reached the south bank of the Ajay.[146] Marching quickly for a mile they attacked the Marātha camp all of a sudden. The Marāthas fled immediately without trying to know the strength of the enemy's army or making any attempt to oppose it.[147] The Bengal soldiers chased them vigorously and killed many of them.[148] In the morning the Nawāb sent reinforcements in elephants, cannon, and soldiers from the other bank of the Ajay, and soon personally appeared on the scene. He pursued the fugitive Marāthas up to

The Nawāb's troops crossed the Bhāgīrathī and the Ajay on bridges of boats.

[140] *Ibid.*

[141] Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 545-46. Uddhāraṇpur is so called after the celebrated Vaiṣṇava saint Uddhāraṇ Datta.

[142] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 517.

[143] *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 38.

[144] *Ibid.*

[145] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 518; 600 according to Yusuf, f. 38.

[146] Riyāz, p. 345; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 518; Yusuf, f. 38; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 43; Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 540-58; Holwell, I. H. E., p. 130.

[147] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 518.

[148] *Ibid*; Riyāz, p. 345; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 43a.

a place, lying at a distance of about four miles from Kāṭwah, [149] and came back to the camp deserted by them, to enable his army to have some rest there. [150]

Retr-at of the Marāthas through Pachet, Bāñkurā, Midnāpur, and Orissā.

Bhāskar fled to Pachet and his detachments scattered in Burdwān, Hugli, Hijli, and other places also took to their heels. [151] The Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on the 30th October, 1742 (para. 6): "The Nabab (Nawāb) near his capital being joined with the forces from Patna and other parts advanced to Cuttua (Kāṭwah), the Morattoes (Marāthas) retreating before him a Battle Ensued, the victory fell to the Nabab who drove them into the Punchat (Pachet) country but with little or no loss on either side. They are since retired to Ramgur, the Party of them at Hughley (Hugli) and Tanna have since quitted those places." The Marāthas could not be pursued further by the Bengal troops through the dense jungles of Pachet. [152] Acting according to the instructions of Mir Habib, Bhāskar left Pachet, turned towards Bisṇupura (in the Bāñkurā district), and then advancing by way of Candrakonā reached the Midnāpur district, [153] where he encamped at Nārāingarh and "burnt and plundered Rādhānagar and other towns." [154]

Bhāskar sent a detachment also to Orissā, where Alivardi's Deputy Governor, Shaikh Māsum, bravely attempted to oppose it but was defeated and killed at Jaipur. [155] Thus Orissā was about to fall uuder Marātha control. But Alivardi's prompt measures prevented it. On hearing of the sad fate of Shaikh Māsum, he left Pachet and advanced through Burdwān to

149 Yusuf, f. 38.

150 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 519.

151 Yusuf, f. 38; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 519.

152 *Ibid.*

153 *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 39.

154 Letter to Court, 30th October, 1742, para. 25.

155 *Ibid*, dated 8th January, 1743, para. 90. At Hariharpur according to Ghulām Husain, Wafā (f. 24B) writes that Shaikh Māsum fought with the Marāthas and fell before them at Padampur.

Midnāpur.[156] Bhāskar, thereupon, fled towards Bālāsore but soon turned back and had a fight with the Nawāb, at a distance of about four miles from Midnāpur,[157] which resulted in his defeat with a loss of several soldiers.[158] This disconcerted the Marāthas, who immediately turned their back, being hotly pursued and driven beyond the Chilkā lake by the Nawāb's troops in the month of December, 1742.[159]

The Marāthas driven back beyond the Chilkā lake.

Alivardi stayed at Cuttack for about two months[160] for the purpose of restoring his authority in Orissā. He appointed Abdul Nabi Khān, uncle of Mustafā Khān, Deputy Governor of Orissā, with Durlabhrām, son of Jānkīrām, as his *peshkār*,[161] and returned to Murshidābād on the 10th February, 1743,[162] where he distributed 30 lacs of rupees among his soldiers[163] as a reward for their most faithful services under so many difficulties. When the news of Alivardi's victory over the Marāthas reached the Delhi Court, the Emperor wrote to him a congratulatory letter, bestowed on him the title of Husām-ul-mulk (sword of the kingdom), and rewarded him with a sword, a dagger, a necklace inlaid with precious gems, and a special dress of honour.[164] The titles of Ehteshām-ud-daulah, Mahām-ud-daulah, Ehterām-ud-daulah, and Ekrām-ud-daulah were conferred on Shahāmat Jang,

156 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 519; Yusuf, f. 39.

157 *Ibid.*

158 *Ibid.*

159 *Ibid*; Letter to Court, 8th January, 1743, para. 90; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 43b; Riyāz, p. 346.

160 Wafā, f. 25A.

161 *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 591. Karam ali (Muzaffarnāmah, f. 44A), Yusuf (f. 40), and Ghulām Husain Salim (Riyāz, p. 346) have wrongly stated that the Deputy Governorship of Orissā was now conferred upon Abdul Rasul Khān, a nephew of Mustafā Khān. Abdul Rasul Khān was a son of Abdul Nabi Khān and later on succeeded his father as Deputy Governor of Orissā after his death.—Siyar, Vol. II, p. 534.

162 Letter to Court, 15th February, 1743.

163 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 44a.

164 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 520; Yusuf, f. 41.

Saulat Jang, Haibat Jang, and Atāullah Khān respectively. Mustafā Khān was elevated to the rank of 3,000 *mansabdārī*.

The first Marātha invasion resulted in Bhāskar's disastrous defeat and ignominious retreat to the Deccan in December, 1742. But, in the meanwhile, an enemy in the garb of a friend had appeared in Bihār from an unexpected quarter.

Safdar Jang at Patna.

In response to Nawāb Alivardi's prayer for help against the Marāthas, Emperor Muhammad Shāh ordered Safdar Jang, the *subāhdār* of Oudh, to protect Bihār, and if necessary to advance into Bengal. Safdar Jang [165] started from Faizābād early in December, 1742, with 10,000 Hindusthānī soldiers, 7,000 *Qizilbāsh* cavalry, who had become attached to him after deserting the army of Nādir Shāh, and with numerous artillery and a well-equipped camp. A strong rumour was afloat that he was coming at the head of 40,000 men with a *firman* for the *subahdārship* of Bengal. The English in Bengal believed in this rumour and their Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on the 8th January, 1743: "From Patna we learn that Subah (*Subahdār*) of Oudh was advancing that way with 40,000 horse, reported that he had a Phirmaund (*firman*) for the Subahship of Bengal." At the earnest request of Safdar Jang, Amin Khān, Governor of Allahābad, permitted him to utilise the fortress of Chuṇār. He then crossed the Ganges near Benares and proceeded with his family to Chuṇār. Having garrisoned the fort there with his own men, he marched towards Patna with his consort and family in a manner equally pompous and imposing.

His advance engendered great panic among the citizens of Patna, who had heard much about the oppressive conduct of the *Qizilbāsh* soldiers during Nādir's massacre of Delhi. Zainuddin Ahmad, Governor of Patna, then in Bengal, and his Deputy, Sayyid Hedāyat Ali Khān, were also seized with apprehension. But through the intercession of Murid Khān, who had come to

[165] My account of '*Safdar Jang at Patna*' is based on Ghulām Husain, Yusuf, Dastur (f. 272), and Bengal General Letters to the Court of Directors.

Patna as an agent of the Delhi Emperor, Hedāyat Ali Khān advanced up to Maner, a place of historic importance lying to the south-west of Patna, to wait on Safdar Jang, who received him with politeness and affability. The Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on the 8th January, 1743: "... the king's Duan with the Naib of Patna in his camp. Chief and Council (of the English Factory at Patna) obliged to furnish Boats for Transporting his forces across Zoncah (?) river, his people commit outrages, are under no command, it is said he Designs to give up the Nabob of Muxadavad's (Murshidābād's) Servants' Houses at Patna to plunder. Chief of Council obliged to increase peons to prevent Insults."

Safdar Jang entered Patna City with Hedāyat Ali Khān on the 7th December, 1742, and after visiting it encamped at Bānkipur, five miles west of it. From that place he began to act as the virtual ruler of Bihār. Having ordered Hedāyat Ali Khān to vacate the Patna fort for his troops after removing everything belonging to Zainuddin Ahmad, he placed a guard of his Persian soldiers at the gate of the fort, thus blocking all *ingress and egress*. But Ghulām Husain, as instructed by his father Hedāyat Ali Khān, succeeded in bringing out of the fort, during the night, a considerable portion of Zainuddin Ahmad's wealth and furniture to a place near it; these were soon removed by Hedāyat Ali Khān to a comparatively safe place near his house. On the following day, Safdar Jang returned to the city with great pomp and placed the fort there under the control of his own men. Then visiting the tomb of his maternal grandfather, that is, father of Saādat Khān Burhān-ul-mulk, lying outside the city of Patna, he returned to his camp at Bānkipur. The high officers of the Nawāb's government, the *Mansabdārs*, the Zamindārs, the *Jāgirdārs*, in short, almost all the gentry of the city, followed him there and presented *nazars*. But Safdar Jang accorded them a cold reception. He took possession of three or four elephants, and three or four pieces of cannon, belonging to Zainuddin Ahmad Khān, in spite of a protest from Hedāyat Ali Khān. The

English factory at Patna had also to experience some troubles, and the Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on the 8th January, 1743: "Safdar Jang is since arrived at Patna and forbid all intercourse with Bengal. They (the Patna factors) are in a manner confined to the Factory at Patna, could not send goods away . . ."

Thus Safdar Jang's behaviour at Patna was far from friendly. He made himself an 'unloved guest' whose departure was more desired than his entertainment. On being informed of his movements, Alivardi left Orissā for Murshidābād and warned him not to enter Bengal. He also wrote to the Emperor Muhammad Shāh requesting him to recall Safdar Jang, as he did not require any help from a man of his nature. Muhammad Shāh, thereupon, wrote to Safdar Jang ordering him to return to his country just on receipt of his letter. On hearing of Alivardi's return from Orissā and of Bālāji Rāo's coming to Bihār to help Alivardi, Safdar Jang made up his mind to depart from Patna. He crossed the Ganges at Maner by a bridge of boats on the 15th January, 1743, and returned to his dominion. Thus the Oudh menace of 1742-43 was warded off. But it created a precedent for Safdar Jang's successor, Shujāuddaulah, to covet Bihār as a sphere of influence. In fact, Shujāuddaulah's part in the battle of Buxar, 1764, was the outcome of his ambition and self-interest rather than of any kind sentiment for Mir Kāsim, the expelled Nawāb of Bengal.

Second Marātha invasion, 1743.

Greater calamities were in store for Bengal. Soon after Alivardi's return from Orissā, Raghuji Bhonsle, instigated by Bhāskar, marched into this province at the head of a large army [166] in February, 1743,[167] with the intention of realising the *chauth* of Bengal, Bihār, and Orissā, which the Emperor Muhammad

[166] About 1 lac according to Muzaffarnāmah, f. 49A and Wafā, f. 23B.

[167] Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743, para. 8.

Shāh had promised to Shāhu and Shāhu had in his turn assigned to Raghuji. With great shortsightedness the Delhi Emperor now tried to save the unfortunate province of Bengal from Marātha devastations by calling in external aid. Being personally powerless to oppose Raghuji, he persuaded the Peshwā Bālāji Rāo, the great rival of Raghuji, to come to this province to chastise him. In return for the Peshwā's help, the Emperor promised him the government of Mālwa and a portion of the arrears of the *chauth* due from Patna.[168]

Bālāji's march through Bihār.

Bālāji Rāo marched into Bihār from the south with a large army of about 50 thousand cavalry. This produced a tremendous consternation throughout the province. All through his way he exacted blackmail from the inhabitants and harassed them in many ways. Ghulām Husain writes that those who paid him money or some rich presents could save their life and wealth, while those who tried to defend themselves were killed and their houses were plundered.[169] Ahmad Khān Qureshi, grandson of Dāud Khān Qureshi, founder of the town of Dāudnagar in the Gayā district, tried his best to defend the neighbouring fort of Ghauspur. But that only brought upon him a terrible chastisement by Bālāji's soldiers, who besieged the fort and compelled him to ransom his life for fifty thousand rupees.[170] The town of Dāudnagar was sacked and plundered. The citizens of Patna grew alarmed and became very anxious for the security of their life, honour, and property. Some of them even sent their families away to Hājipur on the northern bank of the Ganges. But fortunately for them Bālāji did not go to Patna. He marched through Tikāri, Gayā, Mānpur, Bihār, and Monghyr, and reached Bhāgalpur, his troops maltreating and

168 Rājwade, Vol. II, p. 94 ; Duff, History of the Mahrattas (Cambray Edition), Vol. II, p. 13.

169 Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 522-23.

170 *Ibid*, pp. 523-24.

torturing the people of those places. A large number of the inhabitants of Bhāgalpur crossed over to the other side of the Ganges. But a brave lady, widow of Sarfarāz's general Ghaus Khān who had died a heroic death in the battle of Giriā, being unable to remove herself with her large family, boldly resolved to defend her house and honour to the last drop of her blood.[171] Highly impressed with her courage, Bālāji left her property and effects untouched, and deputed a detachment of his body-guard to guard her house till the whole Marātha army had gone out of the place.

Some persons hostile to Alivardi then reported to Bālāji that the Nāwab had stationed at the Teliagārhi pass a faithful general with a body of troops and three pieces of cannon to oppose his advance, and that he should, therefore, enter into the plains of Bengal through the Pachet road. He did not accept their advice but sent for some of the petty Rājahs of the neighbouring Colgong hills, and promised them handsome rewards if they could point out to him the path leading to Bengal through the Rājmahal hills. Though disposed to help him, those Rājahs could not show him the path as they were unfamiliar with the ranges of hills that separated Bengal from Bihār. At last an old Rajput inhabitant of the Colgong hills, named Sitārām Rāy, came forward to guide his army through 'secret passes' into Bengal, for a reward of one lac of rupees.[172] He led the whole Marātha army, as Mr. Holwell has described, "at first Westward, a point or two southernly, until he found a pass, which he sought for about the centre of the range of the Colgong hills. This pass found, was his mark for the remainder of the expedition; he carried them through this pass by very practicable roads with much facility, until the mouth of it opened upon the level country between the Colgong and Teliagurry (Teliāgarhi) hills; from hence his course was due south, which led to the second pass through the last-mentioned hills; this pass he accomplished with equal ease; from hence for two days he

[171] *Ibid.* [172] Holwell, I. H. E., pp. 137-41.

crossed the level country, that lies between the Telliagurry and Rājmahal mountains, shaping his course about south-east; at night he told the General (Bālāji) he must halt until the morning. In the morning he led them due south, and in the evening of the same day entered a pass which guided them through the Rājmahal mountains, and landed (if we may be allowed the expression) the whole army, without the loss of either man or horse, on the plains west of the city of Rājmahal at a little town called Benian Gang on 13th of March, 1743." [173] It took them six days to reach that place from Bhāgalpur, and the old man returned home with due rewards.[174] Then marching through the plains of Birbhum,[175] and the high road leading to Murshidābād,[176] the Peshwā encamped near Mankarah,[177] which is situated ten miles south of the Murshidābād city, while Raghuji had fixed his camp at Kāṭwah.[178]

Bālāji's march into the plains of Bengal.

Thus the two Marātha armies reached the plains of Bengal. Every quarter of west Bengāl was filled with alarm and consternation,[179] and the Nawāb was apprehending if he would not be shuttle-cocked between the two forces. He decided, however, to utilise the Peshwā's help against Raghuji and started from his camp at Amānīganj [180] to meet him. His generals, Mustafā

173 *Ibid.* At first sight it might appear that Holwell's 'Benian Gang' was Rennell's 'Baniagong' (the modern Beniāgrām). But this village is twenty miles south-east of Rājmahal, and Holwell writes that his 'little town' Benian Gang lay west of Rājmahal. There is no Beniagong (Beniāgrām) to the west of Rājmahal near the foot of the Rājmahal hills, but there is a village known as Bāmangāwāu, about one mile to the north-west of Tinpāhār Ry. Station on the E. I. R. Loop Line, and about seven miles south-west of Rājmahal. Evidently then this village corresponds to Holwell's 'Benian Gang.' I am indebted for this piece of information to Babu Manibhusan Sarkār, Dy. Ranger of Forests, Sāhebganj. This point has been also discussed in J. B. O. R. S., September-December, 1929, pp. 568-71.

174 Holwell, I.H.E., pp. 140-41.

175 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 524. Further details about the Peshwā's route have been noted by Sir J. N. Sarkār in his 'Fall of the Mughal Empire,' Vol. I, p. 95, Footnote

176 Yusuf, f. 43.

177 Letter to court, 13th August, 1743.

178 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 424; Yusuf, f. 42.

179 *Ibid.*

180 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 49a; Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743.

Khān, Shamshir Khān, Umar Khān, Hāidār Ali Khān, Mir Jāfar Khān, Fakhrullah Beg Khān, Raham Khān, and others, accompanied him with their banners aloft so that the Peshwā might be impressed with the strength of the Bengal army.[181]

Conference between Alivardi and Bālāji at Plassey, 31st March, 1743.

After a few days' negotiations,[182] the Nawāb of Bengal and the Peshwā met in a conference at Plassey on the 31st March, 1743.[183] The Nawāb agreed to pay Shāhu the *chauth* for the province of Bengal, and 22 lacs of rupees to the Peshwā, who promised to "accomodate matters" with Raghuji in such a way that he might not invade Bengal in future. The Peshwā received also some elephants and jewels[184] as presents. Pressed by the Peshwā, the Nawāb had to pay him the whole amount[185] before he could persuade him to march with him against their common enemy, Raghuji.[186]

On hearing of the march of the allied Bengal and Poona troops, Raghuji deserted his camps at Kāṭwah and Burdwān and ran away to Birbhum.[187] But the Nawāb and the Peshwā crossed the Bhāgīrathī the next day and chased him vigorously.[188] After two or three days' march the Peshwā pointed out to the Nawāb that the Bengal army would not be able to overtake Raghuji and so he should pursue him personally with his light Marātha cavalry.[189] The Nawāb agreed to this, whereupon the Peshwā marched rapidly the following day, overtook Raghuji in time, inflicted a defeat on him, and compelled him to leave Bengal with great loss of his men and much of his baggage.[190] Bhāskar, who had

Raghuji's expulsion from Bengal.

181 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 49B : Siyar, Vol. II, p. 525.

182 *Ibid.*

183 Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743. According to Riyāz (p. 351), Alivardi met Bālāji at Birbhum.

184 Yusuf, f. 43.

185 Siyar, Vol II, p. 524.

186 Yusuf, f. 44; Wafā, f. 25B; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 525.

187 *Ibid.* 188 *Ibid.* 189 *Ibid.*

190 *Ibid*; Wafā, f. 25B.

been waiting near Midnāpur with a party of soldiers, also retreated to his country through Orissā.[191] The Peshwā too being duly satisfied returned to Poonā. Thus the two Marātha armies left Bengal by the end of May, 1743.[192]

Alivardi came back to Murshidābād.

Alivardi returned to the Murshidābād city, where his mother soon died at the age of ninety.[193] His nephew Żainuddin went back to Patna and had a defence wall constructed round that city in the teeth of opposition from the citizens.[194] There were at that time some intrigues and troubles among the officers of Alivardi at Dacca.[195] Gokulchānd, an eminent financier, employed as the *diwān* of Husain Quli Khān at Dacca, accused his master before Shahāmat Jang of having misappropriated some money. Husain Quli, therefore, lost his office, which was conferred on Yāsin Khān, *faujdār* of Dacca, and the post of *faujdār* was given to Mir Qalandar. Husain Quli soon returned to Murshidābād and got himself reinstated through the influence of Ghasiti Begum, eldest daughter of Alivardi and consort of Shahāmat Jang. Yāsin Khān felt insulted and thought of retiring to private life, but he was persuaded by his friend Atāullah Khan, *faujdār* of Rājmahal and Bhāgalpur,, to act as his deputy there. Husain Quli proceeded to Dacca, and being now assured of Ghasiti Begam's favour, became arrogant and overbearing. He dismissed Gokulchānd and appointed Rājballabh to his post. He soon came back to Murshidābād to live close to his patroness, leaving his nephew Husainuddin Khān as his deputy at Dacca.

191 Yusuf, f. 44 ; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 525; Riyāz, p. 351.

192 Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743, para. 8.

193 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 52A

194 Siyar, Vol II, pp. 526-27. This opposition was due to the fact that it could not be erected "without ruining the houses already built on the site of the old wall, or close to it." Thus there was already an old wall in a dilapidated condition. Rennell (*Memoir of the Map of Indostan*) noticed there a wall in good condition; this might be the wall built under Zainuddin's orders.

195 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 525.

The Marātha menace appeared again after nine months. In the beginning of March, 1744,[196] Raghuji sent his generals Bhāskar Paṇḍit and Alibhāi Qarāwwal[197] at the head of 20,000 horsemen[198] to invade Bengal through Orissā and Midnāpur.[199] This time Raghuji had no fear of opposition from the Peshwā, because, on the 31st August, 1743, Shāhu had effected a compromise between the two rival Marātha chiefs by defining their respective spheres of influence. The *subahs* of Mālwa, Agrā, Ajmere, Allahabad, and the two estates of Tikāri and Bhojpur (including Dāudnagar) in Bihār yielding an annual revenue of 12 lacs of rupees, fell to the share of the Peshwā, while the rest of Bihār and the *subahs* of Oudh and Bengal (inclusive of Orissā) to that of Raghuji.[200]

Third Marātha invasion under Bhāskar, March, 1744.

Alivardi heard of Bhāskar's march on his way to Rājmahal, and so returned to Murshidābād in two days.[201] The reappearance of the Marāthas bewildered him to a degree. Much of his military strength had been exhausted, many of the Bengal soldiers had lost their lives on the battle-fields, the province had been terribly devastated, and the exchequer of its government had become bankrupt, mainly due to the payment of a subsidy to the Peshwā in 1743, and the expenses of maintaining a huge army and of providing necessary equipments for war. To add to these, the Nāwab's own health had been too much shattered to enable him to lead his army in person. So, from various considerations, he now decided not to meet sword with sword,

A grave situation for Alivardi.

196 Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para 8.

197 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 528. Ali Qarāwwal was "one of the Marātha leaders that had embraced the Muhammadan faith and was surnamed Ali Bhāi."—Riyāz, p. 347. Ghulām Husain notes that he was a famous general whom Bhāskar entrusted with command over 6,000 horsemen.

198 Yusuf, f. 45.

199 *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 528.

200 *Aitihāsik Patravyavahār*, II, 35 and 36; Sarkar Fall, Vol. I, p. 102.

201 Wafā, f. 26A.

but to frustrate the designs of the Marāthas by a stratagem.

With this object in view, Alivardi held frequent consultations with his brave and designing general Mustafā Khān.[202] Mustafā Khān expressed his willingness to undertake the task of entrapping and massacring Bhāskar with his followers, conditionally upon his being promised the governorship of Bihār. Alivardi having agreed to it, Mustafā Khān began to hatch a plan in secret. He opened negotiations with Bhāskar and informed him that his master wanted peace and compromise and he himself would try to bring it about.[203] At this, Bhāskar slackened his military preparations and expressed his desire to meet Mustafā Khān. To expedite matters, Alivardi sent his *diwān* Jānkīrām and Mustafā Khān to Bhāskar's camp at Dignagar, 32 miles south-west of Kāṭwah, and himself went to Mankarah.[204] Mustafā Khān and Jānkīrām won Bhāskar's heart with fascinating speeches and sacred vows, and convinced him of the necessity of a meeting between himself and Alivardi in order to arrive at a definite settlement of the *chauth* affair.[205] But still entertaining some suspicion of foul play, Bhāskar, instead of going personally to Alivardi's camp all at once, sent Alibhāi Qarāwwal with 25 horsemen in the company of Mustafā Khān apparently to pay respects to the Nawāb but in reality to ascertain the actual state of affairs there.[206] Alivardi, Jānkīrām and Mustafā Khān conquered his heart with sweet, artful and impressive speeches,[207] and persuaded him to believe in the desirability and practical utility of a meeting.[208] He was then sent back to Bhāskar

Alivardi resolved to kill Bhāskar by a stratagem.

[202] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 528.
[203] *Ibid*, p. 529.
[204] *Ibid*; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 44A; Yusuf, f. 46; Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 641-42.
[205] *Ibid*.
[206] Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, line 642; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 529.
[207] *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 46; Wafā, f. 26B.
[208] *Ibid*.

with Mustafā Khān and Jānkīrām. All of them exhorted Bhāskar so much that he was led to banish all suspicions from his mind. When Mir Habib warned Bhāskar against the assertions of the Nawāb's agents,[209] both Jānkīrām and Mustafā Khān took solemn oaths according to the forms of their respective religions,[210]—Jānakīrām by touching the sacred water of the Ganges and *tulasī* (a sacred plant) leaves and Mustafā Khān by holding a copy of the Korāṇ in his hands. While these negotiations were in progress, Alivardi tried to humour Bhāskar by sending him delicious fruits and other food-stuffs, produced in Bengal or imported from outside.[211] Bhāskar agreed to meet Alivardi at Mankarah [212] on the 31st March, 1744.[213]

Alivardi knew it well that for the fulfilment of his perfidious design strict secrecy was needed. He had, therefore, disclosed his intention to no one save Jānkīrām, Mustafā Khān, and Mirzā Beg Khān, and wanted to make others believe that he was eager for peace.[214] As the day of interview drew near, a magnificent tent was pitched [215] at Mankarah, and a large space of ground was enclosed with high screens of canvas. In the morning of the appointed date (31st March), Alivardi went inside the tent with his nephew Saulat Jang, Atāullah Khān, and Mir Kāzim Khān, leaving a party of his troops at some distance behind the tent.[216] Mir Jāfar Khān was posted at the

[209] Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 647-50.

[210] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 529; Riyāz, p. 348. According to Riyāz, Mustafā Khān "had with him under a cover a brick instead of the Korāṇ, and holding it he repeated oaths." *Cf.* :—

"Kichu kintu jadi mane kara tumi |
Korāṇa daramāna kairā kirā khāichi ami ||
Jānkīrām kahe gaṅgājala śālagrāma laiā |
Kichu cintā nāi tomāke āniva milāiā ||"

Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines, 654-60.

[211] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 529; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 44A; Yusuf, f. 47.

[212] *Ibid.*

[213] Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744. [214] Muzaffarnāmah, f. 44A; Riyaz, p. 348.

[215] According to Yusuf (f. 47) the tent was pitched one day before the date of interview.

[216] Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 529-30; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 45B.

gate of the tent with a few soldiers; Hāider Ali Khān was asked to wait on the way through which the Marāthas were to come; and Mirzā Dāwar Quli was placed at a short distance from him with his artillery.[217] A batch of picked soldiers was kept hidden beside the wings of the tent.[218] After these arrangements, Alivardi disclosed his intention to Saulat Jang, Atāullah Khān,[219] Mir Jāfar Khān, and Fakrullah Beg Khān, and asked them to stand fully armed in two close rows inside the tent.[220] Out of curiosity, a large number of men flocked to the spot from different quarters.[221]

Precautions of Alivardi.

Bhāskar arrived at Mankarah on the 31st of March with 22 generals and Alibhāi Qarāwwal [222] keeping 15,000 or 20,000 horsemen at a distance of four miles from the Nawāb's tent.[223] Mustafā Khān and Jānkīrām received him at the gate of the tent and conducted him inside [224]; but they soon went away on the plea of executing some important task.[225] Bhāskar then proceeded in front of the Nawāb, when the tent-pitchers following his (the Nawāb's) signal "dropped down the screens of the pavilion, tied them strongly with tent ropes, and cut off the ingress and egress of friends and foes."[226] Mirzā Hākim Beg introduced Bhāskar to the Nawāb, who being duly satisfied as to his identity after enquiring thrice, ordered his concealed soldiers to fall upon him and his companions.[227] Mir Kāzim Khān, Bār Khordār Beg, and some others rushed upon Bhāskar and his generals. Mir Kāzim Khān killed Bhāskar with one stroke of his sword,[228] and his generals [229] also were soon dispatched.[230]

Bhāskar's interview with Alivardi at Mankarah.

Assassination of Bhāskar and his companions.

217 *Ibid.* 218 Riyāz, p. 348. 219 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 529. 220 Yusuf, f. 47.

221 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 45B; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 529. 222 *Ibid*, p. 530.

223 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 46A; Riyāz, p. 348. 224 *Ibid*; Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, line 671.

225 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 530. 226 Riyāz, p. 348.

227 *Ibid*; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 46B; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 530. 228 *Ibid.*

229 22 according to Siyar (Vol. II, p. 530); 19 according to Yusuf, f. 48; 17 according to Wafā, f. 28B; 70 according to Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para. 8.

230 The Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa gives a slightly different account in this connection. According to it, the Nawāb left the tent after talking for some time with Bhāskar, on the plea of

Mustafā Khān and Umar Khān fell violently upon the leaderless Marātha soldiers and massacred a large number of them.[231] Alivardi himself mounted his elephant and chased his fugitive enemies up to Kāṭwah.[232] Raghuji Gaikwāḍ, who being too shrewd to be moved by Mustafā Khān's and Jānkīrām's oaths had kept himself outside the tent, fled away homewards with ten thousand horsemen and with as much baggage as he could quickly load.[233] Other Marātha detachments roving about Burdwān and Dignagar and in the tracts lying between Midnāpur and Rājmahal also took to their heels.[234] Thus "the whole Morattoe (Marātha) army fled out of the province."[235] On returning to the capital city Alivardi distributed ten lacs of rupees among his soldiers in recognition of their services. Further, in response to his request, the Delhi Emperor bestowed the title of *Babar Jang* (tiger in battle) on Mustafā Khān, and of *Bāhādur* (valiant) on Mir Jāfar Khān, Fakhrullah Beg Khān, Haider Ali Khān, and others, who had fought so gallantly against the enemy. They were also promoted to higher ranks. Alivardi himself got the surname of Shujā-ul-mulk (the valiant of the kingdom) and a special *khelāt* of honour.[236] He

Massacre and expulsion of the Marāthas.

Return of Alivardi to Murshidābād.

answering the call of nature. When he did not return for a long time, Bhāskar wanted to leave the place to take his bath and meal, and Mustafā Khān also agreed to follow him. But just as Bhāskar was getting on his horse, Mustafā Khān struck him with sword and left him dead on the ground.

231 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 46B ; Siyar, Vol II, p. 530.

232 *Ibid.* The Siyar (Vol. II, p. 530) mentions the following interesting incident in this connection :—

While Alivardi was about to mount his elephant, one of his slippers was missing. "I must have my other slipper," said the Nawāb, "before I can lay my feet upon the bare ground." "Pray," screamed out a voice, "is this a time to look out for a slipper ?" "No indeed," replied the Nawāb, "it is not, but were I now to go without my slippers you would not fail tomorrow morning to say that Alivardi was in such a hurry to get out of the fray that he left his slippers behind."

233 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 531 ; Riyāz, p. 349.

234 *Ibid.* Wafā writes that 200 Marāthas were made prisoners.

235 Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para. 8.

236 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 531 ; Yusuf, f. 49.

now reduced the number of his troops from a sense of relief and security.[237] Shahāmat Jang gave himself up to pleasures and brought a dancing party from Delhi with a lavish expenditure.[238] But Hāji Ahmad being dissatisfied with his brother went away to his son Zainuddin Ahmad at Patna.[239] His dissatisfaction was due to the fact that the post of *faujdār* of Hugli, so long coveted by him, was given by Alivardi to Sayeed Ahmad after his return from Orissā. Sayeed Ahmad had a quarrel with the Alimans (Germans) at Hugli over the question of customs.[239a] Some oppressive measures of one of his officers, named Subhān Singh, excited the Germans to make a night attack on the Hugli fort, but they were opposed violently by the guards and had to flee away in boats in the morning. Sayeed Ahmad thereupon sent Husain Razā Khān and Subhān Singh with a strong force to besiege the factory of the Germans. But being devoid of experience and guided by a false sense of security, they began to take rest in the garden of Omichānd near Hugli, when at dead of night the Germans fell upon them. This created a confusion in their camp and they took to their heels. On learning this Alivardi sent Mir Jāfar Khān to chastise the Germans at Hugli. Mir Jāfar Khān besieged their factory, which was soon vacated by them. Some people believed that Mir Jāfar Khān accepted a bribe of 10,000 rupees from the Germans and allowed them to escape out of their factory.[239b]

Fourth Marātha invasion, 1745.

The tragic fate of Bhāskar and his companions generated a burning desire for revenge in the mind of Raghuji, who was thenceforward on the look-out for an opportunity to advance again into Bengal. He got it in the course of a year, when Mustafā

237 *Ibid*; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 47B.
238 Yusuf, f. 49.
239 *Ibid.*
239a Muzaffarnāmah. f. 47B.
239b *Ibid.*

Khān, the foremost of Alivardi's Afghān generals, raised the standard of rebellion against his master and invited Raghuji to invade Bengal. He marched immediately at the head of 14,000 cavalry and reached Orissā in March, 1745.[240]

The rebellion of Mustafā Khān created an opportunity for it.

As after Mustafā Khān's rebellion, his nephew, Abdul Rasul Khān, had joined his standard, Durlabhrām, son of Rājah Jānkīrām, had been appointed deputy governor of Orissā.[241] The new governor was a weak-minded priest-ridden man, too much addicted to superstitions.[242] Bewildered at the sudden approach of the Marāthas, he first shut himself up in the fort of Barābāṭī for about a fortnight, after which he was foolish enough to visit Raghuji in his camp where he and his followers were made prisoners.[243] He was taken to Nāgpur where in September, 1746, he approached Visāji Vikāji to persuade the Peshwā to mediate for his release.[244] His father Jānkīrām ransomed him in December, 1746, by paying 3 lacs of rupees to Raghuji.[245]

Durlabhrām imprisoned by the Marāthas.

His release in 1746.

The fort of Barābāṭī was bravely defended for one month and a few days by a lieutenant of Durlabhrām, named Mir Abdul Aziz, a Sayyid of Sāmāna.[246] But he surrendered it at last for want of provisions on condition that his as well his followers' person, honour, and property should be left untouched by the Marāthas and no one should be compelled to join them.[247]

Surrender of the Barābāṭī fort.

240 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 546.
241 *Ibid.*, p. 534.
242 *Ibid.*, p. 545.
243 *Ibid.*, p. 546.
244 S. P. D., Vol. 20, letter No. 37.
245 *Ibid.*, letter No. 46; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 547.
246 *Ibid.*, p. 546.
247 *Ibid.*

Alivardi had gone to Patna in pursuit of the Afghāns when Shahāmat Jang communicated to him the report of Raghuji's advance.[248] He immediately started back for Murshidābād. The Afghāns being still in open rebellion, and the city of Murshidābād being rather insufficiently provided with means of defence, he thought it expedient to manage somehow or other to put off opposing Raghuji actively as long as possible, and accordingly deputed Munim Ali Khān to him with a false proposal of peace.

Alivardi's attempt to humour Raghuji for some time.

Raghuji could study the situation well and demanded three *crores* of rupees.[249] Alivardi prolonged the negotiations for about two months and a half till, fortunately for him, Mustafā Khān was slain near Jagadishpur, 18 miles south-west of Arrah, on the 20th June, 1745.[250] This relieved him of an extremely embarrassing situation, and enabled him to assume a strong attitude towards Raghuji. He now wrote to him: "An agreement brought about by dint of money, is the effect of either impotence, or some great hope. As to the first, I inform you that by God's blessing, my warriors are more covetous than ever of another engagement with you, and more desirous of fighting than hunters are getting at their prey. And as to the second article, I must tell you, that they cannot expect any benefit from entering into a treaty with so unfortunate a Commander as yourself. Matters standing thus, the aggreement you expect, cannot be brought about but by a battle . . . ."[251]

His strong attitude after the death of Mustafā Khān.

But this intimidation did not stop Raghuji's advance. He entered the Burdwān district in the month of June, 1745,[252] which 'caused great confusion and prevented Business from going on at several Aurungs.'[253]

Raghuji in Burdwān and Birbhum.

On the 20th July he proceeded to Birbhum whence he sent his detachments to Cuttack, Midnāpur and Hijli.[254]

248 *Ibid.*
249 *Ibid.* 250 Letter to Court, 11th August, 1745. 251 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 547.
252 Letter to Court, 11th August, 1745, para. 9. 253 *Ibid.*
254 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 547; Yusuf, f. 58; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 67A.

About this time, Murtazā Khān, son of Mustafā Khān, Buland Khān, and some other distressed Afghāns, who had been spending their days of adversity, after the death of Mustafa Khān, in the mountains of Magror near Chainpur and Sāsārām, sent piteous appeals to Raghuji to rescue them.[255] Considering that their alliance would strengthen his party, Raghuji marched towards Bihār at the end of the rainy season of 1745.[256] Passing through the jungles of north Birbhum and the hills of Kharagpur (south of Monghyr), he reached Futwah, and having pillaged and burnt it,[257] plundered Shaikpurā and other villages in the estate of Tikāri, and then forded the Son river. After rescuing the Afghāns he re-crossed the river at Arwal and advanced towards Patna. Due to the alliance of the Afghāns, the number of his soldiers now swelled to 20,000 men.[258]

Raghuji's march into Bihār.

His alliance with the Afghāns.

Alivardi left Murshidābād for Bihār in the month of October, 1745,[259] at the head of 12,000 choice horsemen, with a strong determination to expel the Marāthas out of that province. On hearing of his march, the Marāthas fled from Patna to the south. The Nawāb encamped for a few days at Bānkipur and settled some quarrels in the family of his nephew Zainuddin. Then he proceeded to attack his enemy through Naubatpur (13 miles south-west of Mithāpur, the site of the Patna Junction Railway Station) with an army fully replenished and supported by a powerful artillery.[260] But the Marāthas avoided an open fighting

Alivardi's march into Bihār in pursuit of the Marāthas.

255 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 547.

256 Yusuf, f. 58.

257 Letter to Court, 31st January, 1746, para. 11.

258 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 548; Yusuf, f. 58.

259 *Ibid*; Letter to Court, 31st January, 1746, para. 112.

260 The commanders of the vanguard were Mir Jāfar Khān, and Shamshir Khān; at the right were Atāullah Khān and Sardār Khān; at the left, Zainuddin Ahmad Khān. The

and proceeded in front of him, always keeping themselves beyond the range of a cannon-shot, till his army reached Rāṇī's tank near Mehib Alipur (on the east bank of the Son, 19 miles south-west of Naubatpur), where Raghuji had fixed his camp. Here the vanguard of the Bengal army under Mir Jāfar Khān and Shamsbir Khān attacked Raghuji all of a sudden. The other portions of the Marātha army tried their utmost to save their chief, who ultimately escaped due to a negligence on the part of Shamshir Khān or, more probably, to his treachery.[261] In the meanwhile, Alivardi had advanced to join his army in chastising the Marāthas. But Raghuji fought bravely and held his ground during eighteen days' fighting, though he was struck in the mouth by a chance shot,[262] and two of his generals, named Mahimāji Bābā and Sankarāji Bābā, were killed on November 14 and 20 respectively.[263]

Furious fighting at Mehib Alipur; escape of Raghuji.

Suspecting Mir Jāfar Khān and Shamshir Khān to be traitors at heart, Alivardi felt rather perplexed. But his Begam, who often helped him with sound advice, now also came forward to give some comfort to her worried husband.[264] On her own initiative, she sent Taqi Ali Khān and Muzaffar Ali Khān as envoys for peace to Raghuji.[265] Raghuji, acting under the advice of Mir Habib, refused to accede to the proposals of the Nawāb Begam, and started for Murshidābād with a view to plundering that city before the Nawāb could reach there.[266]

The Nawāb Begam's proposals rejected by Raghuji.

flank was put under the charge of Sayeed Ahmad Khān, who was supported by Shāh Jahānyār and Umar Khān. Raham Khān was seated on the elephant that carried Alivardi's main standard; and Alivardi was in the centre with the flower of his soldiers commanded by Fakhrullah Beg Khān, Nurullah Beg Khān, and several other veteran and faithful generals.—Siyar, Vol. II, p. 549.

261 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 549.

262 Yusuf, f. 59.

263 S. P. D., Vol. 21, Letter No. 74.

264 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 550.

265 *Ibid*.

266 *Ibid*; Yusuf, f. 60.

The Nawāb's troops crossed the river Son with great difficulty, suffering mightily from want of provisions. Two eminent officers of Zainuddin, Jaswantnāgar and Mir Ghulām Ashraf, joined them after having undergone great troubles, on their way, at the hands of Marāthas. Alivardi turned towards Bengal through Maner and Patua. On the way Raghuji with five or six thousand men turned back and fell upon him, near Bhāgalpur, on the stream of Champānagar. Alivardi with only 600 men charged them most vigorously and drove them away.[267] He was ably served on this occasion by one of his officers, named Dost Muhammad Khān.

Both Raghuji and Alivardi proceeded towards Murshidābād; they fought on the way near Bhāgalpur.

Apprehending that his march through the high road might bring him again into conflict with Alivardi's troops before he could reach Murshidābād,[268] Raghuji marched from Bhāgalpur through the hills and jungles of Santāl Paraganās and Birbhum.[269] He arrived near Murshidābād on the 21st December, 1745, and pillaged "the towns over against Muxadabad (Murshidābād) and several villages about them,"[270] such as Jhapāidah and the garden of Mir Jāfar. The Marāthas roved for three or four days through the southern and western suburbs of the city.

The Marāthas again in Bengal.

Proceeding along the main road Alivardi reached Murshidābād on the 22nd December, 1745.[271] He soon marched against Raghuji, who had fled towards Kāṭwah on hearing of his advance, and overtook him at Raṇīdīghi (tank)[272] near Kāṭwah. A sharp engagement ensued, which resulted in the defeat of Raghuji with heavy losses in men and baggage, and compelled him to retreat to

A sharp engagement near Kāṭwah and Raghuji's defeat. He went away to his own country, leaving Mir Habib and some others in Bengal.

267 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 550; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 69A.
268 Yusuf, f. 60; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 550.
269 *Ibid.*
270 Letter to Court, 31st January, 1746, para. 116.
271 *Ibid.*
272 *Cf.* Gaṅgārāma's "Vardhamāne Rāṇīdīghira pare."

Nāgpur.[273] He left behind in Bengal two or three thousand Marātha horsemen and six or seven thousand Afghāns, including Ghulām Murtazā Khān and Buland Khān, under the command of Mir Habib,[274] to continue his work. On the 3rd January, 1746, the Marāthas appeared about six miles west of Cāssimbāzār.[275] The English factors at Cāssimbāzār wrote to the Council in Calcutta on the 17th February, 1746, that the Marāthas "still continuing near them makes it impossible to send the bales (of cloths) down with safety."[276] But in the beginning of March, Atāullah Khān advanced with a "large force" to expel the Marāthas, whereupon they "quitted the island (of Cāssimbāzār)."[277]

Roving bands of Marāthas, however, remained scattered in Burdwān, Bāñkurā, Midnāpur, Cuttack, and Balasore.[278] The Council in Calcutta stated in the letter to the Court of Directors, dated the 30th November, 1746: "A body of Marattoes have continued at Midnapore the whole season under the command of Meer (Mir) Habib, some of the party are in Ingellee (Hijli) and Deans Town (near Diamond Harbour) which places they have been in entire possession of." Practically the whole of Orissā remained under Mir Habib's control. But Alivardi did not march there immediately to expel his enemies. After two hard campaigns in Bihār, he thought it necessary to remain at Murshidābād for some time to restore peace and tranquillity in the ravaged tracts, to recuperate strength, and to conciliate his soldiers.[279] Dost Muhammad Khān and Mir Kāzim Khān now received special favours. During this respite Alivardi celebrated

Roving bands of Marāthas in certain places.

273 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 551; Yusuf, f. 61.
274 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 551; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 69A; Yusuf, f. 61.
275 Letter to Court, 31st January, 1746, para. 122.
276 Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 93.
277 *Ibid*, para. 96.
278 *Ibid*, para. 95; Yusuf, f. 64.
279 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 551.

with great pomp the marriage ceremony of his grandson Sirājuddaulah.

In the meanwhile, Mir Habib apprehending chastisement by Alivardi appealed to Raghuji for help and agreed to pay him a subsidy of 11 lacs of rupees. Raghuji was thus tempted to think of sending an army to Bengal under his son Jānoji with Karānde, Vāgh, Gaekwāḍ, and some other Marātha *sardārs*.[280] In the month of November, 1746, he mobilised his troops for the intended expedition,[281] but his financial difficulties prevented him from actually sending it.[282]

Raghuji's financial difficulties prevented him from reinforcing Mir Habib in Orissā.

Alivardi could not afford to delay any longer to recovery of Orissā. He soon appointed Mir Jāfar Khān, *bakhshi* or Paymaster of his army, deputy governor of Orissā.[283] Mir Jafār Khān received in addition the post of the *faujdār* of Midnāpur and Hijli. He left his cousin Mir Ismāil (son of his maternal uncle) as his substitute in the post of *bakhshi*, sent Subhān Singh as his deputy in the post of *faujdār* at Hijli, and marched from Murshidābād in November, 1746, with about 8,000 cavalry and 12,000 infantry[284] with the object of expelling the Marāthas.[285] On Mir Jāfar Khān's arrival at Midnāpur, a party consisting of both the Marāthas and the Afghāns fled towards Balasore.[286] But he advanced a little further and inflicted a defeat on Mir Habib's lieutenant, Sayyid Nur, near Midnāpur, about the 12th December, 1746.[287] Mr. Kelsal, chief of the Company's factory at Balasore, wrote to

Alivardi's arrangements for the recovery of Orissā.

Mir Jāfar defeats Sayyid Nur near Midnāpur.

280 S. P. D., Vol. 20, No. 44.
281 *Ibid*, No. 41.
282 *Ibid*.
283 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 555; Yusuf, f. 64.
284 *Ibid*.
285 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 113.
286 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 555.
287 Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 110.

the Council in Calcutta on the 16th December that Sayyid Nur " with his two head officers were killed and the Marathoes that escaped passed through that place in their way to Cuttack in hopes to join Meer (Mir) Habib who is on his march thither from Connacah (Kanikā) the Rodjah (Rājah) of which place with his family he (Mir Habib) had taken prisoners. That the Phousdar (*faujdār*) of Balasore had sent away all his things and was ready to fly himself, Mir Jaffier (Mir Jāfar) with 15,000 men being hourly expected." [288] He wrote again on the 25th January, 1747, that Mir Habib was encamped " about Two miles distant from the town (of Balasore) with Eight Thousand Horse and 20,000 Foot, that he is raising Batteries along the river (Barā Bālang) side and planting cannon upon vessels with a Resolution to make a stand against the Nabob's forces." [289]

Fifth Marātha invasion; march of Jānoji, 1747.

Jānoji, son of Raghuji, had by this time arrived at Cuttack with a large army, and intended to proceed northwards to help Mir Habib. This caused great apprehension in the mind of Mir Jāfar Khān, though he had 20,000 men with him. He hurriedly fell back from Midnāpur to Burdwān, being pursued by the vanguard of Jānoji's army, which captured some of his elephants and baggage. [290] Alivardi strongly censured [291] this disgraceful retreat of Mir Jāfar Khān, and sent a strong force under Atāullah Khān Sabet Jang and Fakhrullah Beg Khān to reinforce his party at Burdwān. [292] They had an indecisive engagement with the Marāthas under Jānoji joined with those under Mir Habib. An evil motive soon gained possession of the minds of Mir Jāfar Khān and Atāullah Khān, and they formed a conspiracy to seize the

Treachery of Mir Jāfar and Atāullah.

[288] *Ibid.*
[289] *Ibid.*
[290] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 555; Yusuf, f. 65.
[291] *Ibid.*
[292] Muzaffarnāmah, f. 29B; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 555.

governments of Bengal and Bihār after assassinating Alivardi. But the Nawāb came to know of their secret design in a short time and inflicted condign punishment on them. Atāullah Khān was dismissed, the contigent of Mir Jāfar Khān was dissolved, the paymastership of the Nawāb's army was bestowed on Nurullah Beg Khān, and Subhān Singh was appointed *faujdār* of Hijli. [293]

The treachery of these generals, on whom Alivardi had relied so much after the defections of the veteran Afghān generals like Mustafā Khān, Shamshir Khān, Sardār Khān, and others, could not cow him down, though he was then an old man of seventy-one. He personally led his army to Burdwān and defeated the Marāthas in a furiously contested battle.[294] The Marāthas tried to create a diversion in their favour by making a dash upon Murshidābād and plundering it in his absence. But being hotly pursued by his troops, [295] they could not carry their resolve into effect and were forced to run away to Midnāpur. [296] Alivardi then returned to his capital as the rainy season was about to set in. Throughout the year 1747 the Marāthas remained in possession of Orissā up to Midnāpur. [297]

Defeat of Jānoji near Burdwān and his retreat into Midnāpur.

The outbreak of a formidable Afghān insurrection in Bihār in the beginning of 1748, the consequent death of his brother Hāji Ahmad and Zainuddin, and the temporary usurpation of Patna by the insurgents, placed Alivardi in an extremely critical situation and compelled him to march to Bihār once again. In the meanwhile, the main body of the Marāthas under Jānoji had advanced from Midnāpur to a locality near Burdwān, and there were "several

Alivardi's march into Bihār in 1748.

The Marāthas scattered in different parts of Bengal.

293 Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 555-56; Yusuf, f. 66.
294 *Ibid.*
295 *Ibid.*, fs. 67-68.
296 *Ibid.*; Siyar, Vol II, p. 557.
297 Letter to Court, 24th February, 1748.

straggling parties of them about the country." [298] Some of them were attempting to enter Dacca by the Sunderbuns, [299] some had come up to the Tanna's Fort near Calcutta, [300] while a large number entered into Murshidābād, [301] and plundered at Cāssimbāzār a fleet and some goods of the Company in charge of Ensign English. [302] The English Company tried, through the intercession of Omichānd, to " recover the whole or any part of the Company's goods " that had been plundered by the Marāthas. [303] Omichānd sent one Bowān Singh (?) to Jānoji, who gave the following reply : " Bowān Sing has arrived with me and acquainted me of the depredations made on the Company's boats ; had I been informed of it before I should have made strict enquiry among the army about it. But after the boats were plundered the prisoners that were brought from them never made use of the Company's name, otherwise I should have stopped all the goods. Now they are dispersed among many and in diverse places, however to oblige you what steps I have taken Bowān Singh will advise you. I am now going to Patna to destroy my enemies and transact some other affairs, which has occasioned a delay, however when I arrived at Boglepore (Bhāgalpur), I will use all my endeavours to recover all your goods." [304] The Council in Calcutta then tried to obtain a redress for the Company's losses, caused by the plundering of the Marāthas, by appealing to the Poona Court. In compliance with its request, Mr. Wake, President of the Council in Bombay, sent a messenger to Shāhu Rājah with a prayer to

The English tried to recover their goods, captured by the Mārathas, through the intercession of Omichānd.

298 Consultations, 25th February, 1748.

299 Consultations, March, 1748.

300 *Ibid.*

301 *Ibid.*

302 Consultations, 25th February, 1748.

303 Consultations, 25th April, 1748. It appears that Omichānd was on friendly terms with the Marāthas.

304 Consultations, 25th April, 1748.

redeem the aforesaid losses of the Company in Bengal, but the messenger returned " without any written answer from the (Shāhu Rājah)," and " his trifling excuses " extinguished all hopes of redress. [304a]

With a view to harassing Alivardi by forming an alliance with the Afghān insurgents, the Marāthas had decided to postpone plundering west Bengal for the time being and to move towards Bihār in pursuit of the Bengal army. [305] So Mir Habib marched with 5,000 horsemen and 7,000 infantry [306] through the hills and the jungles of the Sāntāl Parganās, [307] and emerging in the vicinity of Bhāgalpur made a surprise attack on the rear of the Nawāb's army near the stream of Champānagar. But this party was repulsed after causing only some loss to the camp-followers.[308]

The Marāthas pursued Alivardi's army and fought an indecisive battle near Bhāgalpur.

Soon the two batches of the Marāthas under Mir Habib and Jānoji joined the Afghāns at a little distance to the east of Patna City. [309] Jānoji and Mir Habib presented rich vestments and other articles to Shamshir Khān and his friends. Mir Habib, accompanied by Mirzā Muhammad Sāleh, Mohan Singh, and a few other distinguished persons, went to enjoy a feast, which Shamshir Khān had arranged for him. After the entertainment was over, Mir Habib was conducted into a magnificent room for afternoon rest. Shamshir Khān ordered his people to allow him a sufficient repose, but to detain him, when he

The Marāthas joined the Afghāns near Patna.

[304a] Consultations, November, 1748; Letters to Court, 27th January, 1749 and 10th August, 1749.

[305] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 564.

[306] Wafā, p. 52B.

[307] Riyāz, p. 357; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 565. On their way to Bihār, the Marāthas once halted at Heräpore.—Consultations, March, 1748. Heräpore corresponds to Hirāppur, 14 miles west of Pākur Rly. Station.

[308] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 565.

[309] *Ibid.*; Yusuf, f. 78.

would want to go away, by demanding 30 or 40 lacs of rupees for the expenses of the troops that they had raised to help the Marāthas. Mirzā Sāleh tried to save Mir Habib out of his difficulty. He advised some of his horsemen to go away from the camp and to return suddenly, shouting that they were pursued by the Nawāb's troops. This raised a tumult and confusion, taking advantage of which Mir Habib sought to run away to his own camp. But he was obstructed on the way by two Afghān generals, who put forward their demands. Mir Habib argued that the enemies being so close, the settlement of money matters should be deferred. But the Afghān generals did not allow him to go until he promised to pay two lacs of rupees, for which a banker became his security.[310] This behaviour of the Afghān generals wounded Mir Habib's feelings to a great extent. So, when the Marāthas and the Afghāns had to fight against the Nawāb, the former in a rather indifferent manner attacked the Nawāb's forces only from the rear, and "employed themselves in plundering the spoil, instead of assisting their allies."[311]

Shamshir Khān's stratagem to realise money from Mir Habib wounded his feelings.

Alivardi inflicted a crushing defeat on the allied Afghān and Marātha troops at Rāṇīsarāi, eight miles west of Bārh, on the 18th of April, 1748.[312] Mir Habib and Jānoji then fled away towards Murshidābād with a view to plundering it in the Nawāb's absence.[313] But on the way Jānoji heard of his mother's death and retreated to Nagpur[314] leaving Mir Habib with the major portion of the troops at Midnāpur. Raghuji Bhonsle soon sent his younger son Sābāji Bhonsle

Crushing defeat of the Marāthas and the Afghāns at Rāṇīsarāi : retreat of Jānoji to Nāgpur.

310 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 566 ; Yusuf, fs. 79-80.

311 Orme, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 42.

312 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748. For further details, *vide* Chapter IV.

313 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 576.

314 *Ibid.*

to reinforce him with a party of horsemen.[315] With his headquarters at Midnāpur, Mir Habib sent detachments to plunder different parts of Orissā. Thus, though Bengal and Bihār enjoyed a respite from the ravages of the Marāthas, Orissā still remained under their control.[316]

Mir Habib at Midnāpur reinforced by Sābāji ; Orissā under Marātha control.

Alivardi left Patna after appointing Sirājuddaulah nominal Deputy Governor of Bihār with Rājah Jānkīrām as his deputy, and returned to Murshidābād on the 30th November, 1748.[317] After a short rest he left his capital about the middle of March, 1749,[318] and went to Kāṭwah to assemble his troops for the recovery of Orissā.[319] A few months ago he had sent Hāider Ali Khān, commander of his light artillery, to Burdwān with 8,000 soldiers to intercept the advance of the Marāthas from the south.[320] Arriving at Burdwān on his way to Orissā, Alivardi ordered Hāider Ali Khān's troops to accompany him to Midnāpur, but they expressed their unwillingness to move forward unless their arrear dues were cleared off. Alivardi sent Mirzā Hakim Beg and Ghulām Ali Khān, father of Yusuf Ali Khān,[320a] to the mutineers, and proceeded personally also before them; but they would not stop their clamours. Highly enraged at this, he dissolved the whole detachment, and nothing daunted marched towards Midnāpur with only 5,000 or 6,000 cavalry but without a single piece of cannon.[321] On hearing of his advance, Mir Habib set fire to his own camp and fled away with his followers to the south. The Nawāb did not enter into the town

Alivardi's march for the recovery of Orissā.

315 S. P. D., Vol. 20, letter No. 55, refers to Sābāji Bhonsle's return from Bengal to Nāgpur in 1749. Sābāji is wrongly mentioned as Mānāji in Siyar (Vol. II, p 576) and Yusuf (fs. 88-89).

316 Yusuf, f. 89.

317 Letter to Court, 22nd December, 1748.

318 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 576.

319 *Ibid.*

320 *Ibid.*

320a *Vide* Bibliography.

321 Yusuf, f. 90.

of Midnāpur but crossed the river Cossai (Kñāsāi), and encamped on the other side of it. The Marāthas had stopped in the jungles of Midnāpur, where they were pursued and defeated by Dost Muhammad Khān, Mir Kāzim Khān, and some other generals of the Nawāb.[322] On the 5th May, 1749, Mr. Henry Kelsal, Chief of the English Factory at Cuttack, informed the Council in Calcutta of the Marāthas "being encamped within sight of the Kuttack Factory and that the Nabob's (Nawāb's) forces were distant but 3 cose (6 miles) from that place." Again, on the 8th May following he wrote that "Nilla Pundit with the command of a strong party of the Marattoes (Marāthas) was encamped close to the Factory, and that their putting off the plundering of that place was the saving of it, for as their horse entered the town the Nabob (Nawāb) appeared and immediately sent part of his forces over the river and pursued them and got up with them in a very small time."[323]

The Marāthas defeated near Midnāpur.

The Nawāb continued to pursue the Marāthas up to Balasore, where he was informed that Mir Habib, Sābāji, and their soldiers had retreated into the jungles of Cuttack.[324] He proceeded towards Cuttack, and having crossed the two branches of the river Vaitaraṇī at Bhadrak and Jājpur, halted at a placed named Barā, about 36 miles north of Cuttack.[325] Sayyid Nur, Sarandāz Khān, and Dharmadās Hāzāri, who had joined the Mārāthas after deserting Alivardi and had been placed by them in charge of the Barābāṭī fort, now sent letters to him communicating their desire to renew their allegiance to his authority on his arrival at Cuttack.[326] But he paid no heed to these overtures and continued to pursue the Marāthas through the forest, amidst various odds and uncertainties. When the fugitives could not be traced even after a long and tedious

Alivardi's advance into Cuttack.

322 *Ibid.*
323 Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749 A.D.
324 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 577.
325 *Ibid.*
326 *Ibid.* ; Yusuf, f. 91.

march, he came out of the forest, and leaving a body of troops on the way out of it, marched from Barā with about 2,000 soldiers to make a surprise attack on the fort of Barābāṭī at Cuttack.[327] After eighteen hours' tiresome march, with his army reduced to only three hundred soldiers,[328] already fatigued, he arrived before the fort of Barābāṭi on the 17th May, 1749.[329] The garrison in the Barābāṭi fort instead of opposing the Nawāb's army agreed to surrender it the next day.[330] In the morning of the 18th May, when the officers of the fort went to see the Nawāb, Sayyid Nur and Dharamdās were put under strict confinement, and Sarandāz Khān, who offered a slight resistance, was killed.[331] On hearing of the sad fate of these officers, the garrison resolved to defend the fort, and shut its gates. The Nawāb thereupon invested it. After holding out for fifteen days, the besieged garrison surrendered themselves to him.[332] Thus was Orissā recovered from the hands of the Marāthas.

Recovery of Orissā by Alivardi.

The English factors at Cuttack closely watched the Nawāb's movements. Mr. Henry Kelsal wrote to the Council in Calcutta on the 19th May, 1749, "that the Nabob (Nawāb) was encamped within three leagues of Cuttack, and that he hourly expected to hear the news of the Meerabib's (Mir Habib's) and Angosherff's (?) being delivered into the Nabob's (Nawāb's) hands by their own Jemindar (Jamādār)"; and two days later he again reported that "some of the people whom he had sent to follow the Nabob's (Nawāb's) army were returned with the news of his having entered Cuttack. That on his approach Meer (Mir) Habib with the Morattoes (Marāthas) fled."[333]

[327] *Ibid.* [328] *Ibid.*

[329] Consultations, 24th, 27th, 29th May, and 17th June, 1749.

[330] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 578.

[331] *Ibid*; Riyāz, p. 360; Muzaffarnāmah, fs. 54B-56A.

[332] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 578; Yusuf, f. 94.

[333] Consultations, 24th, 27th, 29th May, and 17th June, 1749; Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749.

In order to avoid the approaching rainy season, Alivardi decided to return to his capital as soon as possible after appointing some one deputy governor of Orissā.[334] Both Mir Jāfar Khān and Durlabhrām refused to accept this post under the apprehension that 7,000 or 8,000 Marāthas,[335] who had concealed themselves in the neighbouring jungles, would return after Alivardi's departure.[336] He then appointed a cavalry officer, named Shāh Abdus Subhān Khān, to that office, and started back for Murshidābād.[337]

The Marāthas re-occupied Cuttack.

But Cuttack was soon re-occupied by the Marāthas. Six or seven days after Alivardi's departure from Cuttack, they came out of the jungles and wounded Abdus Subhān Khān, though he presented a gallant opposition.[338] Alivardi heard of this disaster after his arrival at Balasore on the 6th June, 1749.[339] But he was not in a position to return for the recovery of Cuttack, as his troops had been greatly fatigued and the rainy season was about to set in. So he marched quickly towards Murshidābād amidst various troubles and privations,[340] and reached there early in July.[341] The hardships of the distant campaigns affected his health at the 73rd year of his life, and soon after his return to Murshidābād; he was attacked with a serious illness, which lasted till October, 1749.[342]

The Marāthas were then engaged in pillaging different parts of Orissā and even threatened the English factory at Cuttack.[343] Mir Habib and Mohan Singh went to Balasore on

334 Yusuf, f. 94.

335 Yusuf, f. 97.

336 *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 579; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 55B; Consultations, 29th May, 1749.

337 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 580; Yusuf, f. 96. Yusuf Ali was then present in the Nawāb's company.

338 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 580.

339 Consultations, 19th June, 1749.

340 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 578; Yusuf, f. 96.

341 Consultations, 6th July, 1749.

342 Consultations, 18th October, 1749.

343 *Ibid*.

the 15th October,[344] while the Afghāns, who formed their rear-guard, joined them two days later[345] to "form altogether an army of 40,000."[346] About the month of December, a detachment of the Marāthas was creating disturbances in certain parts near about Calcutta. On the 19th December, Captain George Minchin wrote from Dean's town (near Diamond Harbour) to the Council in Calcutta "that he should distress the Mahrattas to the utmost of his power as he looked on the sloops to be in a state of defence sufficient to secure the men from the shot of the Mahrattas, he intended to bring them in close to the shore, and that he apprehended he will be able to distress them greatly if not entirely destroy them."[347] After Captain Minchin had fired 13 shots and 17 shells at them, they desired a parley.[348]

In such circumstances, Alivardi could not remain indifferent and inactive in his capital. He marched to Kāṭwah, and after assembling his army there, proceeded *via* Burdwān to Midnāpur in December, 1749.[349] On hearing of his advance, the Marāthas concealed themselves in several places. But Alivardi decided to spend that season at Midnāpur to close for ever the path of Marātha inroads into Bengal.[350] He fixed his camp outside the town on the Kñāsāi river, appointed Ali Quli Khān, commander of Sirājuddaulah's brigade, *faujdār* of Midnāpur, and sent a detachment under Sirājuddaulah to Balasore to expel the Marāthas.[351] The vanguard of this detachment under Dost Muhammad Khān and Mir Kāzim Khān advanced bravely against the Marāthas, who took to their heels. Alivardi could not bear long separation from his favourite grandson and so went person-

Alivardi at Midnāpur in December, 1749.

[344] Consultations, 26th October, 1749.
[345] *Ibid.*
[346] *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 580; Yusuf, f. 99.
[347] Consultations, 21st December, 1749.
[348] Consultations, 22nd December, 1749.
[349] *Ibid.*
[350] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 581.
[351] *Ibid.*

ally to Nārāingarh to see him. They soon came back to their camp at Midnāpur. The Nawāb then sought to remove some abuses in his army, but this gave rise to a great discontent among his troops, and so the plan of reform had to be abandoned.[352]

The Marāthas dash up to Rājmahal and Murshidābād.

While the Nawāb was still encamped at Midnāpur, "a body of several thousand Morattoes (Marāthas) had passed (gone past) him (early in March, 1750) and plundered the country as far as Rājmahal," whence they proceeded towards Murshidābād. Mir Habib at the head of 12,000 Marātha horsemen reached within four miles of the Murshidābād city and had a skirmish with Mir Jāfar's troops "in which they obliged them (Mir Jāfar's troops) to retreat nearer the city . . . the two armies were then encamped near each other, and the Morattoes (Marāthas) were daily sending out parties to burn and plunder all around them."[353] At this, the Nawāb left Midnāpur and marched back to Burdwān,[354] whereupon the Marātha raiders fled into the jungles lying west of Murshidābād. At Burdwān a Zamindār of the jungle-tracts proposed to Alivardi that he would guide him properly through the hills against the Marāthas. Alivardi marched under his direction, but on the third day of the march the latter committed suicide on account of his inability to find out the path in question. So in view of the difficulties aud dangers of proceeding through the jungles, Alivardi hastened back to Burdwān, where he halted for some time in the garden of Mānikchānd, *diwān* of the Rājah of Burdwān.[355] He heard within a few days that the vanquished Marāthas had returned to Midnāpur, and so went again to that place. But the Marāthas had disappeared before his arrival. He intended to

Alivardi chased the Marāthas from place to place.

His stay at Midnāpur.

[352] *Ibid*, p. 582; Yusuf, f. 100.

[353] Letter to Court, 24th August, 1750, para. 64; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 582; Yusuf, f. 101.

[354] *Ibid*.

[355] Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 582-83; Yusuf, f. 102.

stay at Midnāpur for some time as no one ventured to accept the post of *faujdār* there.

But an unexpected danger soon compelled him to alter his plan. Mahdi Nisār Khān, a dismissed and discontented general of the Nawāb, instigated Sirājuddaulah, in whom Alivardi lived and moved and had his being, to make an attempt to become the independent governor of Bihār after removing the Nawāb's agent Jānkīrām.[356] To give effect to this design, the capricious youth left Midnāpur under the pretext of visiting the palaces at Murshidābād. He started from the capital city with his Begam Lutfunnisā, joined Mahdi Nisār Khān at Jafār Khān's garden, and attacked the Patna city. Jānkīrām found himself in a fix. He could not leave the city undefended, but at the same time he apprehended that any injury to Sirājuddulah would deeply wound the feelings of his grandfather. His troops bravely opposed the assailants, but were driven back in an encounter with them at the Hājiganj *mahāllā* (quarter) of the Patna city. The capture of the entire city was, however, prevented by them, and the leaders of the insurrection, named Mahdi Nisār Khān, Mirzā Madāri Beg Deccāni, and Amānat Khān, were killed in course of the fighting. This disconcerted the other followers of Sirājuddaulah, who ran out of the city. Sirājuddaulah himself found a safe protection in the house of Mustafā Quli Khān, brother of his father-in-law Muhammad Iraj Khān.

Attempt of Sirājuddaulah to seize the government of Bihār and his dash on Patna city, June, 1750.

Alivardi had left Midnāpur immediately on hearing of Sirājuddaulah's march from Murshidābād to Patna. He halted at Murshidābād only for one day and marched quickly to Bihār. On arriving at Ghiyāspur near Bārh he learnt all that happened. He hastened to Patna and effected a reconciliation between Jānkīrām and Sirājuddaulah. Jānkīrām governed Bihār efficiently[357] till his death in 1752 A.D.

Alivardi's march to Bihār and his return to Murshidābād with Sirājuddaulah.

356 Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 583-88; Yusuf, fs. 103-07; Muzaffarnāmah, fs. 82B-83A.

357 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 80A.

During his stay at Patna Alivardi was attacked with a high fever. But he could not remain there, as the Marāthas still threatened Midnāpur, which he had left in charge of a few incompetent officers.[358] He proceeded with Sirājuddaulah in a boat to Murshidābād, being attended on the way by some eminent physicians, and recovered by September, 1750. But he could not take rest for some time, because the news of his illness at his old age had filled the minds of his soldiers at Midnāpur with great despair, and the tactlessness and cowardice of his officers, Durlabhrām and Mir Jafār Khān, had emboldened the Marāthas to fall upon that place. So, in a rather weak state of health, he marched to Midnāpur in December, 1750,[359] defeated Mir Habib and compelled him to run away into the neighbouring jungles. Being further chased by the Nawāb's army, he retreated towards Orissā. The Nawāb then returned to Kāṭwah postponing the expulsion of the Marāthas till the next year.[360]

Alivardi's illness.

His recovery and march to Midnāpur

Defeat and retreat of Mir Habib; return of Alivardi to Kāṭwah.

Time sometimes solves what baffles the best of human endeavours. Repeated campaigns and ravages, during no less than eight years, brought no lasting benefit to the Marāthas. This led them to think of gaining something by an amicable settlement with the Bengal Nawāb. The Nawāb also could not check their depredations in spite of constant vigilance and profuse loss of men and money. Worn out with incessant toil and weighed down with age at the 75th year of his life, Alivardi had no inclination to continue active fighting with the Marāthas any longer. The western and southern parts of his province had been devastated, and the inhabitants there panted for peace and

Both the parties eager for peace.

358 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 589.

359 *Ibid*, p. 590.

360 *Ibid*; Consultations, 6th September, 1751 A.D.

safety.[361] Thus, both the parties became eager for peace by the year 1751.

Negotiations for a treaty.

Negotiations for a treaty began to be carried on by Mirzā Sāleh,[362] on behalf of the Marāthas, and Mir Jāfar, on behalf of the Nawāb. Mirzā Sāleh was introduced by Mir Jāfar to the Nawāb at Kāṭwah. They then proceeded to Murshidābād and settled the conditions of the treaty. It was finally signed with the consent of the Nāgpur Court, in May or June, 1751, on the following terms :—

Terms of the treaty of 1751.

(1) Mir Habib should henceforth be regarded as being in the service of Alivardi and should be appointed by him Deputy Governor of Orissā on his own behalf. He should spend the surplus revenues of Orissā to pay off the arrear salary of Raghuji's soldiers.

(2) From 18th Āśvin 1159 B. S. (October, 1751)[363] twelve lacs of rupees should be paid annually to the Marāthas from the Bengal revenue as the *chauth* of that *subah* in two *kistis* (instalments), on " condition that the Marāthas would never set their foot again within the dominions " of Alivardi.

(3) The river Subarṇarekhā (wrongly referred to as Sonāmakiā by Ghulām Husain) near Jālāsore was fixed as the boundary of the Bengal *subah*, and the Marāthas agreed never to cross it again.[364]

Mir Habib was not destined to enjoy for a long time the new office, which he obtained after several years' incessant toil, bloodshed, and devastation of Bengal, Bihār and Orissā. His fortune proved to be the cause of his ruin. Many became jealous of his sudden rise to power, and " his strictness of command and his imperiousness of temper " incensed them highly. So when about a year after

Mir Habib's end.

[361] Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 590-91.

[362] Later known as Musālih-ud-din Muhammad Khān.—Riyāz, p. 361; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 591.

[363] C. P. C., Vol. II, pp. 331-32.

[364] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 591.

the conclusion of the treaty, Jānoji came to Orissā as his father's representative to command the Marātha infantry kept there for defence, the enemies of Mir Habib poisoned Jānoji's mind against him. Jānoji summoned him to his tent with his 40 or 50 followers to submit an account of the revenues of Orissā. He was then murdered cruelly under Jānoji's orders at about midnight of the 4th September, 1752,[365] along with some of his followers.[366] Ghulām Husain considers this fall of Mir Habib to be a dispensation of divine justice in return for the ruin of many families and destruction of many houses during the repeated Marātha incursions, for which he was responsible to a large extent. The Riyāz[367] gives a different account of Mir Habib's death. It writes that Alivardi himself brought it about by a clever trick. He sent to Mir Habib a letter to the following effect: "The letter sent by you has been received; what you have written in respect to your plan to extirpate the Mahratta (Marātha) freebooters, has met with my approval. It is a very good idea; you from that side, and I from this side, will be on the alert and wait. By every means possible, try and induce them to come this side, and then what is now in the minds of us both will come to pass." He sent this letter through a messenger, whom he advised to follow a route where he might be overtaken by the Marāthas. His manoeuvre was crowned with success, and Jānoji murdered Mir Habib out of suspicion. It might be that Alivardi had some hand in the matter of Mir Habib's destruction. After his murder, Mirzā Sāleh (Musālih-ud-din), an officer of the Nāgpur Court and one of the negotiators of the treaty, was appointed Deputy Governor of Orissā with the mutual consent of Alivardi and the Marāthas.[368]

[365] Letter from Chandernagor to Masaulipattam, dated 11th October, 1752, quoted in Correspondance du conseil de Chandernagor avec divers 2e partie, p. 435.

[366] Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 592-93.

[367] Riyāz, p. 360.

[368] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 593

Effects of the Marātha invasions :—

The Marātha incursions were perhaps the most calamitous events in the history of Bengal during the first half of the eighteenth century. Their influence was felt, more or less, in every sphere of life, economic, social, and political. It is a mistake to think that the depredations of the Marāthas were directed only against important cities and towns, and that they ceased with the beginning of the rainy season. We have it on the authority of all the contemporary writers, as well as certain letters of the Council in Calcutta to the Court of Directors, that the villages in the interior parts of Western Bengal did not escape ravages and plunders at their hands. The cottages and dwellings of the poor and the middle class people, living in villages, were more miserably affected than the banking houses of Jagat Seth or the palace of Nawāzish Muhammad in the metropolis. Jagat Seth's house was plundered only once, but the houses of these poor villagers were burnt and their property and effects were looted from year to year. The Marāthas used to stop only their military operations like actual fights and sieges with the outbreak of the rainy season, but their plundering activities were then carried on more vigorously than before.

(a) Economic.

The Marātha ravages exercised a highly pernicious influence on trade, industries, currency, and agriculture of Bengal. As a matter of fact, the economic anomalies from which the province suffered during the mid-eighteenth century were to a large extent legacies of the Marātha raids.[369]

(b) Social.

In society, the influence of the Marātha invasions was felt in two ways—(*i*) on the composition of the population of the province and (*ii*) on the moral prestige of the people. We have already observed how a large number of people migrated from Western to Eastern and Northern Bengal, or to the British settlement in Calcutta, where

[369] I have discussed in details the effects of the Marātha ravages on different aspects of economic life in Chapters VII and VIII.

they expected better protection but not to any other foreign settlement. Thus the desolation of the western part led to the density of population in the eastern and the northern part of the province, and in Calcutta also the population went up.[370] Besides this, some Marātha families settled about this time in certain parts of Bengal. Holwell refers to a Sati case in a Marātha family at Cāssimbāzar in the year 1743.[371] The forefathers of the Marātha family, now domiciled at Karun, a village in the Deoghur subdivision of the district of Sāntāl Paraganās (Bihār), came to Bengal in the train of Bhāskar's followers, and did not return to their own country.[372] Some other Marātha families also settled in Bengal about the same time. It is quite probable that they established themselves here permanently being tempted by commercial and other advantages, as also by opportunities of employment in the revenue-collecting departments of the Nawāb's government. Regarding the second point, we know from Gāṅgārāma that during their invasions of Bengal the Marātha soldiers lost their old 17th century ideal of respect for women, and that indiscriminate violation was the lot of the womenfolk of the plundered or runaway families in the interior parts of the province.

(c) Political.

The Marāthā invasions produced three important effects on the Political History of Bengal. First, they encouraged and hastened the Afghān rebellions in Bihār. Alivardi's Afghān generals served him to the best of their ability during the first few years of his regime; but when his position was somewhat endangered as a result of the repeated invasions of the Marāthas, they demanded from him the redress of certain grievances, and at last broke into open rebellions and fought in conjuction with the Marātha invaders. They

370 It is well known that many upper class Bengali Hindu families moved from west to east Bengal in this time; and a detailed study of family genealogies or papers might show interesting particulars.

371 Craufurd, Sketches, Vol. II. p. 19.

372 I have collected some records of this Marātha family settled at Karun, from the study of which I hope to prepare in the near future the past history of this family.

were actively incited and helped by Mir Habib and the associated Marāthas.

Secondly, these paved the way for the establishment of Marātha political supremacy in Orissā. The treaty of 1751 did not, of course, provide for the cession of Orissā to the Marāthas; it only assigned to them the revenues of its southern part. In theory, Orissā remained under the suzerainty of the Bengal government. But taking advantage of the growing disorders in Bengal, the Marāthas gradually established political authority in Orissā and annexed it to the kingdom of Berār. We know from a number of sources[373] that the Marāthas in Orissā did not remain content within their own sphere, but sometimes carried their ravages into other parts of Bengal. They proved to be a menace to the Bengal Government till Orissā came under British control in 1803 A.D.

Thirdly, the ready offer of shelter by the English to some of the ravaged and runaway inhabitants of the plundered areas of Bengal within the bounds of the Company's settlement in Calcutta, engendered in the minds of these people a feeling of sympathy for, and faith in, the English Company. The English were able to raise a volunteer army, and a certain amount of subscriptions, from the native, the Armenian, and the Portuguese inhabitants of Calcutta, to defend that city against the threatened encroachments of the Marāthas.[374] This shows that the people reposed some amount of confidence in the support of the English. So when, after a few years, Mir Jāfar and some of the influential Zamindārs of Bengal assembled in the house of Jagat Seth at Murshidābād to devise plans for the overthrow of Sirājuddaulah, the wisest of them, Mahārājah Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā, suggested the advisability of inviting the help of the English against the Nawāb, because of their efficient administration of justice, and steady protection of those who sought their help.[375]

[373] Records of the E. I. Co., and C. P. C., Vol. 1-4. I have discussed this subject in my article on the Marāthas in Bengal after 1751, published in the Journal of Indian History, December, 1936. [374] Vaṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣat Patrikā Vol XIII, Part IV, p. 206.

[375] Rājiblocana's Kṛṣṇacandracarita, pp. 64-73.

CHAPTER IV

The Afghan Insurrections

External aggressions become more alarming and find greater opportunity for development in a country if it is tormented by domestic troubles. The Marātha invasions, in themselves a terrible menace to the Bengal Subah, were intricately associated with the rebellions of the Bengal Nawāb's Afghān generals and soldiers, who formed the most numerous and powerful element in his army.

The earlier Afghān settlers in Allahabad, Dārbhangā, Orissā, and Slihet, who may be classed as Indo-Afghāns, had been replenished in the 17th and the first half of the 18th century by a fresh wave of Afghān immigration into Northern India,[1] which was a part of a larger Central and West Asiatic penetration of it in those times. Afghān adventurers found military employments in many places either as retainers or as mercenaries, and some of them began to found principalities and build up spheres of influence of their own, as in Rohilkhand and Farrukhābād. This peaceful Afghān penetration paved the way for, and was conversely assisted and furthered by Afghān invasions from the North-West since 1748, just as in the immediately previous period prolonged Persian influence and penetration culminated in the Persian invasion of 1738-39 A.D.

A new Afghān penetration into Northern India.

Endowed with brilliant fighting qualities and a genius for military organization, the Afghāns were at the same time strongly attached to the interests of their own clans, and by this time they had discovered themselves to be superior to the Mughal empire or its offshoots in the art of warfare. They were

[1] Sarkar, Fall, Vol I, pp. 43-45.

courageous, intractable, and vindictive.[2] Alivardi had received valuable services from the Afghāns of Bihār as the *nāib nāzim* of that province, and also during the first four years of his government as the *subahdār* of Bengal. Mustafā Khān, the most conspicuous of the Afghān generals, helped him considerably from the first invasion of the Marāthas till the assassination of Bhāskar. He became also one of his trusted counsellors in matters of administration.[3] But before long he turned out to be one of his formidable foes.

Valuable services of Mustafā Khān and other Afghāns to Alivardi till the assassination of Bhāskar.

It is often a foible of human nature that an individual considers himself indispensable for a particular position after a few years' service; ambition and avarice then lead him on to a path, which though apparently bright and tempting, brings about his ruin in the long run. Mustafā Khān, who was an extremely ambitious man,[4] was not an exception to this. Uniform success for three or four years made him proud and haughty, and eager to usurp power independently of, or even above, Alivardi.[5]

High ambition of Mustafā Khān for independent power.

Alivardi also was partly responsible for this change in the attitude of Mustafā Khān. In a moment of dire necessity he had promised him the Deputy Governorship of Patna as a reward, if he could assissinate Bhāskar. Mustafā Khān executed the task, but Alivardi evaded the fulfilment of his promise, and tried to soothe him only with sweet words.[6] This justly offended the Afghān general and precipitated an open rupture between the two. Mustafā Khān was shrewd enough to realise soon the sinister motive of the Nawāb,[7] and apprehending some mischief from

Mustafā Khān's suspicions and estrangement.

[2] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 531.
[3] Yusuf, f. 50.
[4] Wafā, f. 29A.
[5] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 531.
[6] *Ibid*, p. 532.
[7] Yusuf, f. 50.

him ceased to attend his court since the middle of February, 1745 A.D. [8] One day before going there personally, he sent his two generals, named Udal Shāh and Hakim Shāh, ahead of him. Shortly after these two brothers had appeared before the Nawāb, a eunuch ran to the spot carrying the news that the Nawāb's Begam was suffering from a violent attack of cholera. The Nawāb thereupon left the place requesting the agents of Mustafā Khān to wait till his return. But they construed it to be a device of Alivardi to imprison them and left his court before his return. They met their master Mustafā Khān, when he was about to enter the Nawāb's court, and expressed their apprehension before him. Mustafā Khān, who had already grown suspicious, readily believed in their statements and returned to his own house. This being reported to the Nawāb, he tried to remove Mustafā's suspicion by deputing to him Nawāzish Muhammad, who, however, with all his efforts, failed in his mission.

Mustafa Khān soon resigned the Nawāb's service, and having mustered a body of 9,000 Afghān horsemen besides a powerful batch of infantry,[9] pressed his demand for the Deputy Governorship of Bihār. He claimed also the arrear pay of his soldiers amounting to 17 lacs of rupees, which the Nawāb paid him at once without examining his accounts.[10] The Nawāb, on his part, adopted some precautionary measures, and kept his troops ready round his palace and the buildings of his relatives, under Nawāzish Muhammad Khān, Sayeed Ahmad Khān, Mir Jāfar Khān, Haider Ali Khān, Fakhrullah Beg Khān, Nurullah Beg Khān, the Afghān general Umar Khān with his sons, and also under Fateh Rāo and other Hindu generals.[11] Mustafā Khān could not win over to his side the Afghān generals, Umar Khān, Raham Khān, Shamshir Khān, and Sardar Khan, as Alivardi had

Open defiance of the Nawāb's authority by Mustafā Khān.

[8] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 532.
[9] Yusuf, f. 51.
[10] *Ibid*; Wafā, f. 30A ; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 533.
[11] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 533.

cleverly managed, through rewards and favours, to keep them attached to his cause.[12]

Mustafā Khān's march towards Patna against Zainuddin.

Being disappointed at Murshidābād, Mustāfā Khān started for Patna towards the close of February, 1745, at the head of eight or nine thousand horsemen, with the object of snatching away the government of that place from Zainuddin.[13] At Rajmahal he seized some elephants, guns, and ammunition belonging to the Nawāb, and began to act openly as his enemy.[14] In response to a letter from him, his nephew Abdul Rasul Khān, Deputy Governor of Orissā, joined him there with his brigade.[15] On

Capture of the Monghyr fort by Mustafā and his advance towards Patna.

reaching Monghyr, Mustafā Khān besieged the fort there, which was then in a bad condition. Abdul Rasul met an accidental death while besieging the fort, but Mustafā Khān soon stormed it, captured Husain Beg Khān, the Nawāb's officer in charge of the fort, with his three sons,[17] and seized several cannon and some ammunition.[18] After staying there for three days, he marched for Patna with 15,000 cavalry (so swelled probably by the junction of Abdul Rasul's brigade).[19]

Mustafā's rebellion, —a terrible menace to Alivardi; his anxiety for Zainuddin.

Thus Mustafā Khān's open rebellion appeared as a great menace to Alivardi. Being anxious for the safety of his nephew Zainuddin, who was then in *mahāl* Bhānwārā[20] of Tirhut, he had already written to him to come down to Murshidābad through the tracts lying on the northern side of the Ganges so as to avoid the route through which Mustafā Khān had been

12 *Ibid*; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 61B ; Yusuf, f. 52.

13 *Ibid*; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 61B ; Wafā f. 30a ; Letter to Court, 11th August, 1745. Siyar, Vol. II, p. 533 ; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 62B.

15 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 534.

16 Yusuf, f. 52 ; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 537. For an account of the Monghyr fort, *vide Bengal : Past and Present*, 1924.

17 Wafā, f. 30B ; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 62B.

18 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 537.

19 Salimullah, f. 126B; Wafā, f. 30B.

20 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 62A.

proceeding.[21] Many of Zainuddin's officers advised him to act on his uncle's instruction, as they apprehended disasters in fighting a brave general like Mustafā Khān, who had then under his control 15,000 cavalry, 150 elephants, and 50 pieces of artillery.[22] But Zainuddin turned a deaf ear to their advice, and having decided to maintain his position by opposing the Afghān insurgents, hurried back to Patna. Instead of entering into his palace, he encamped in Jāfar Khān's garden and quickly adopted various measures for the defence of the Patna city.[23] He assembled his old troops and tried to raise new ones. Some local nobles, like Ahmad Khān Qureshi, Shaikh Jahānyār, Shaikh Hāmid-uddin, Shaikh Amrullah, Karam Khān, Ghulām Jeelāni, Khadem Husain Khān, Jaswant Nāgar, Rājah Kyretchānd, Rājah Rāmnārain, and other Hindu commanders, were directed to raise new levies.[24] Some Zamindārs of the province, such as Sundar Singh of Tikāri, Nāmdar Khān of Narhaṭ and Samāi, Bishun Singh of Seres and Cotombah, Pahalwān Singh and his brother Sabuthar Singh of Sāsārām and Chainpur, and Bharat Singh of Arwal, offered their services to him. Thus within a short time Zainuddin could gather fourteen to fifteen thousand soldiers on his side.[25] His camp was protected on the land side by wooden towers for musketeers. These were joined by curtains and were connected with the embankment raised for the security of the suburbs against the flood from the *jalla* or marsh south-west of the Patna city. A deep ditch was excavated beyond this line of defence, and the earth thus obtained was utilised to to form a rampart outside the water. Guns were placed on the

Zainuddin decided to oppose the Afghāns.

21 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 534.
22 *Ibid.*
23 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 535; Yusuf, f. 52 ; Wafā, f. 31A ; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 62B.
24 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 535.
25 *Ibid.* ; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 62A.

bastions, and portions of the walls were entrusted to different generals.[26] Zainuddin's army was divided into several brigades, each being put under a faithful commander; the first under Abdul Ali Khān, uncle of Ghulām Husain, the second under Ahmad Khān Qureshi (grandson of Dāud Khān Qureshi, founder of Dāudnagar), the third under Rājah Kyretchānd, the fourth under Rājah Rāmnārāin, the fifth under Khādem Husain Khān, and the sixth under Nāsir Ali Khān.[27]

Zainuddin's preparations.

Having taken these precautions, Zainuddin sent a deputation to Mustafā Khān consisting of Hāji Alam Kāshmīrī, Maulavī Tegh Ali Khān, principal of the *madrasah* of Saif Khān at Patna,[27a] and Agā Azimāi. They were sent to ascertain the real intention of Mustafā Khān. On meeting him on the way they communicated to him the following message from Zainuddin: "If by your departure from Murshidābād you have entirely renounced the service of Nawāb Alivardi and intend to forget us and to quit this province, I, out of regard for our past friendship, request that you would kindly come to my house and halt here at least for two or three days so that I may enjoy the pleasure of your company, and may provide you with such carriages, tents, and other things as may be required for your journey.[28] If the discontent you have conceived against the Nawāb is of such a nature as to admit of a healing hand, and your heart tells you that my mediation might be instrumental in removing the cause of your displeasure, and in taking out the shafts that have wounded two hearts once united by the warmest attachment, I would be happy to offer my services for so

His attempt to sound Mustafā Khan's intention.

[26] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 536; Wafā, f. 31B.

[27] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 536; Wafā, fs. 36A-36B.

[27a] Saif Khān's *madrasah* stood on the bank of the Ganges, east of Chimni Ghāt in Patna city. No remains of the *madrasah* can be traced now. But the mosque attached to it still stands.

[28] It is mentioned in the Muzaffarnāmah (f. 63A) that Zainuddin expressed a desire through his envoys to pay 2 lacs of rupees to Mustafā Khān for the expenses of his journey.

desirable an object. But if, on the other hand, you have obtained the Imperial *sanad* for the government of this province, be kind enough to let us see it so that we may leave this province after delivering it to you without any contest."[29]

Mustafā's strong reply.

Mustafā Khān sent a very strong and haughty reply to the effect that his intention was neither to renew his friendship with Alivardi nor to go out of Bengal quietly, but to wrest the government of Bihār from Zainuddin ; and that as regards the Imperial *sanad* for that government, he had the same *sanad* with him as Alivardi had used against Sarfarāz,[30] that is, the *sanad* of superior force.

Mustafā's arrival near Patna city and attack on Zainuddin's army.

Early in the morning of the 14th March, 1745,[31] Mustafā Khān arrived within a mile of Zainuddin's camp,[32] and halted in the mango-groves lying south of the Patna city.[33] Dividing his forces into two brigades,[34] he sent one of them under Buland Khān Ruhelā to fall upon the rear of Zainuddin's defences, while he himself proceeded with the other to the front of the defences which was guarded by Rājah Sundar Singh, Rājah Kyretchānd, and some other Hindu generals.[35] Both the divisions soon fell furiously upon Zainuddin's camp.[36] Some of his generals, like Zulfiqār Khān Mewāti,[37] and Rājah Kyretchānd, with his aunt's son Lālā Uri Lāl, his uncle's young son Bālmukund, and his deputy Deepchānd, presented a bold stand but were wounded and fled away.[38]

Reverses of Zainuddin's troops.

Many other soldiers of Zainuddin followed suit so that there remained with him only 200 cavalry and 150

29 Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 536-37.
30 *Ibid.*; Yusuf, f. 53; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 63B.
31 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 64A; Wafā, f 31B.
32 *Ibid.*
33 Siyar Vol. II, p 537.
34 Wafā, f. 32A; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 537.
35 *Ibid*, p. 538.
36 *Ibid*; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 64B.
37 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 538.
38 *Ibid*; Wafā, f. 33A.

infantry.[39] Mustafā Khān then advanced close to Zainuddin, but the latter sat undaunted on his elephant and by shooting arrows killed Udal Shāh, Hakim Shāh, and a few other Afghān soldiers.[40] Mustafā Khān's elephant-driver was suddenly killed by a musket-shot, and so he jumped down immediately on the apprehension that the elephant being out of control would run amuck causing panic in his army. But many of his soldiers thought that a gun-shot had brought him down, and fled away.[41]

Bravery of Zainuddin.

Death of Mustafā's elephant-driver;

consequent confusion among his troops and their flight.

The two armies stood face to face with each other for about a week.[42] On the 21st March, 1745 A.D.,[43] Mustafā Khān again charged Zainuddin's defences. A section of his army marched against Muhammad Jahānyār Khān and Ahmad Khān Qureshi, and he himself proceeded to the right flank of his enemy's defences. He advanced close to Zainuddin's elephant but was repulsed by Jaswantnāgar.[44] Zainuddin too fought valiantly.[45] A gun-shot suddenly struck the right eye of Mustafā Khān and made him senseless.[46] Towards the evening, his son Murtazā Khān and his soldiers fled away to Mithāpur (the site of the present Patna Junction Railway Station), carried with him on an elephant. He recovered his senses there and expressed regret for his reverses.[47]

Mustafā continued to fight for 7 days

Valiant fighting of Zainuddin.

Mustafā Khān lost one eye; his reverses.

The next day Zainuddin pursued the vanquished Afghāns through Naubatpur (13 miles south-west of Patna Junction Ry.

39 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 539; Yusuf, f. 53.

40 *Ibid.*

41 *Ibid.*

42 Yusuf, f. 53; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 66A; five days according to Ghulām Hussain.

43 Yusuf, f. 54; Wafā, f. 35A; Muzaffarrāmah, f. 66A.

44 Wafā, 35B.

45 Yusuf, f. 54.

46 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 66B; Yusuf, f. 55; Sal mullah, f. 127A; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 541.

47 Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 541-42.

station) and Muhib Alipur (on the east bank of the Son, 19 miles south-west of Naubatpur), and compelled them to retire to the south-west of the Son river. At Muhib Alipur, Zainuddin heard of the arrival of Alivardi near Patna.[48] The Nawāb quickly joined him in chasing the Afghāns beyond the frontiers of Bihār as far as Zamānia, lying opposite to Ghazipur.[49] Mustafā Khān took shelter in a village near the fort of Chunār, which belonged to Nawāb Safdar Jang of Oudh. Yusuf Ali writes that Alivardi thought of attacking Benares, then belonging to Safdar Jang, as a sort of reprisal for the latter's unfriendly behaviour at Patna in 1743. But he could not carry his resolve into effect, as the Emperor Muhammad Shāh, accompanied by Safdar Jang, had advanced as far as the village of Bankarah with the intention of chastising Ali Muhammad Rubelā. Alivardi had to satisfy himself only with the plunder of places adjoining the territories of Safdar Jang.[50] He returned to Patna with Zainuddin in April, but had to leave that place immediately for Bengal, which Raghuji Bhonsle had in the meantime invaded at the invitation of Mustafā Khān.[51]

Alivardi joined Zainuddin and chased Mustafā out of Bihār.

The expulsion of Mustafā Khān from Bihār did not extinguish his ambition. Possessed of a high degree of valour and an indomitable spirit, he remained undaunted in spite of his reverses and acute pecuniary troubles, and resolved to strike once more.[52] Without losing time, he took steps to repair his artillery and arms and to recruit fresh soldiers from various parts.[53] In course of three months, before the rains set in, he had been able to assemble a large army of 18,000 cavalry and 15,000 infantry,[54]

Mustafā Khān's insatiable ambition.

His alliance with some Shāhābād Zamindārs.

48 *Ibid.*; Wafā, f. 38A; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 66B.

49 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 542; Muzaffarnāmah, fs. 66B-67A; Wafā, f. 55; Salimullah, f. 127A.

50 Yusuf, f. 55.

51 *Ibid*, f. 56; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 543.

52 Wafā, f. 39B.

53 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 543.

54 Wafā, f. 39B.

with which he proceeded towards Bihār.[55] He first entered the Shāhābād district,[56] where the Zamindārs, especially Udwant Singh Ujjainiā of Jagadishpur (18 miles south-west of Arrah town), were hostile to Zainuddin.[57]

Zainuddin's march from Patna against Mustafā and a fight near Jagadishpur on the 20th June, 1745.

On hearing of all these, Zainuddin started from Patna on the 2nd June, 1745, at the head of 13,000 or 14,000 soldiers[58] including some distinguished generals, like Shāh Din Muhammad, Raham Khān Ruhelā and others, to oppose Mustafā Khān. After fording the river Son at Koilwār he arrived at the Arrah town[59] and then advanced to Karhani,[60] five miles south of the Arrah town. The Afghāns had already arrived at a place two miles beyond the village of Karhani, and a sharp battle ensued on the 20th June, 1745.[61] Seated on an elephant, Kyret-chānd was commanding the right flank of Zainuddin's army with five thousand cavalry and a few thousand infantry; and Ahmad Khān Qureshi and Jaswantnāgar with their soldiers also strengthened this flank.[62] The strong artillery of Zainuddin could not excite the slightest fear in Mustafā Khān's mind.[63] After a furious chase, he compelled the vanguard of Zainuddin's army to run away from the field.[64] Dāud Khān fell dead with a number of young soldiers,[65] and Khāđem Husain Khān was wounded, his guns being seized by Mustafā Khān. The whole army of Zainuddin became terror-stricken, but Abdul Ali Khān resolved to make a bold stand once more. He was soon reinforced by Mahdi Nisār Khān, Naqi Ali Khān (uncle and brother respectively of the historian Ghulām Husain), Shāh Jahānyār,

55 *Ibid.*; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 67B.
56 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 543; Wafā, f. 40A.
57 Siyar, Vol. II, p 543.
58 *Ibid.*
59 Wafā, f. 40A.
60 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 543. Rennell's 'Gurrahny' (Bengal Atlas, Sheet No. III), or 'Gurranee' (Bengal Atlas, Sheet No IX).
61 Letter to Court, 11th August, 1745.
62 Wafa, f. 41A.
63 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 67B.
64 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 544.
65 Wafā, f. 41B; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 67B.

Rājah Sundar Singh, Raham Khān Ruhelā, Karam Khān, and Rājah Rāmnārain,[66] and advanced to oppose Mustafā Khān, who also had been proceeding towards Zainuddin.[67] Suddenly a musket-ball fell on Mustafā Khān's chest and made him senseless.[68] He quickly recovered his senses and advanced towards Zainuddin, but two arrow-shots by the latter stopped his life-breath.[69] According to Zainuddin's orders, Hāshim Ali Khān, superintendent of his household affairs, jumped upon Mustafā Khān's elephant, struck a dagger into his abdomen, cut off his head, and exposed it before the army on the point of a spear.[70] His dead body was taken to Patna and cut into two halves, one of which was hung at the *Pachim Darwāzā* (Western gate) and the other at the *Purab Darwāzā* (Eastern gate) of the city, before being buried in the compound of Sher Shāh's mosque, under the orders of Zainuddin.[71] Rājah Kyretchand pusued the Afghān soldiers to their camp and captured their tents, horses and many other things.[72] They fled away to the village of Magror (14 miles west of Chainpur on the bank of the Karmanāśā river) under the leadership of Mustafā Khān's son Murtazā Khān.[73]

Death of Mustafā Khān.

His son and followers fled away to Magror.

Thus the first Afghān insurrection was fully suppressed and Zainuddin returned triumphantly to Patna.[74] But fresh troubles were brewing for the Nawāb of Bengal. The distressed Afghān refugees at Magror soon appealed to Raghuji Bhonsle for help, and the Marātha chief invaded Bihār in September, 1745.[75] From this

Afghān-Marātha alliance and second Afghān insurrection.

66 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 544; Wafā, fa. 42A 42B; Muzaffarnāmah. f. 68.

67 *Ibid.* 68 *Ibid.*

69 Wafā, f. 43A; Muzaffarnamah, f. 68A.

70 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 544; Wafā, f. 63A.

71 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 544. *Pachim Darwāzā* and *Purab Darwāzā* are still so called though almost all traces of the old city have disappeared.

72 Wafā, f. 43B. 73 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 545. 74 *Ibid.*

75 *Vide ante*, p. 111.

time the Marāthās in Bengal definitely received support from the Afghān rebels. During his fight with the Marāthas, on the bank of the river Son in November, 1745, Alivardi received no help from his principal Afghān generals, Shamshir Khān and Sardār Khān. Later on they entered into intrigues with Raghuji against Alivardi to share the government of Bengal with him. Alivardi therefore dismissed them from his service in June, 1746, and they then went away with their 6,000 men to their respective homes in Dārbhāngā in North Bihār.[76]

Insincerity of Alivardi's Afghān generals.

They being dismissed from service went away to Dārbhāngā.

But this did not mean the final extinction of Alivardi's troubles from the Afghāns. Greater calamities were in store for him from them, and, by a sad irony of fate, the ground for these was paved by his nephew Zainuddin. Puffed up with conceit on account of his past achievements, such as his help to Alivardi against Bhāskar in 1742 and his successful exploit against Mustafā Khān in March and June, 1745, Zainuddin became ambitious to seize the *masnad* of Bengal by forcibly removing his old uncle, and by bringing under his control his two brothers, whose power and wealth he had seen with his own eyes on his visit to Murshidābād on the occasion of Sirājuddaulah's marriage.[77] Yusuf Ali heard from Mahdi Nisār Khān, Paymaster of Zainuddin's army at Patna, that Zainuddin intended to mete out to his uncle a treatment similar to what the latter had done towards his master Sarfarāz Khān.[78] For the fulfilment of his ambitious design, Zainuddin became eager to enlist the veteran Afghān generals of Dārbhangā in his army. He sent a letter to Alivardi, through Mir Abul Maāli (who being formerly a

Zainuddin's desire to seize the government of Bengal.

His eagerness to enlist the Afghāns in his army.

[76] Yusuf, f. 71; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 546.
[77] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 557.
[78] Yusuf, f. 72.

steward of Saādat Khān of Oudh came later on to live at Patna under the patronage of Zainuddin), stating therein that the dismissed Afghān soldiers, sitting idly in their homes at Dārbhangā, formed a terrible menace to his government, and that as it was not possible to drive them out of the province, it would be advisable to admit their officers and 3,000 soldiers into his service, if the expenses to be incurred for maintaining them were paid from the Murshidābād treasury.[79] Alivardi consented to this proposal rather reluctantly, simply out of fondness for his nephew.

Zainuddin's invitation to the Afghāns of Dārbhangā and interview with them at Hājipur.

After the return of his agent to Patna, Zainuddin sent three persons, named Aga Azimāi (who had for some time served as Paymaster of the army of Saif Khān, Governor of Purneah till 1748 A.D.), Taqi Quli Khān, and Muhammad Āsʿkar Khān, to the Afghāns at Dārbhangā, inviting them to come to Patna and to accept service in his army. By the middle of December, 1747, a large body of Afghāns under Shamshir Khān, his sister's son Murād Sher, Sardār Khān, and Bakhshi Baheliā left Dārbhangā and reached Hājipur, opposite Patna on the northern side of the Ganges.[79a] Suspecting the invitation of Zainuddin to be a trick on his part to suppress them thoroughly, they did not cross the Ganges all at once, but halted at Hājipur for fifteen days, and carried on negotiations with him.[79b] Being eager to engage them, Zainuddin went to Hājipur in a swift-sailing boat with only 2 or 3 personal attendants and his youngest son Mirzā Mahdi.[80] After an interview with him, the Afghān leaders crossed the Ganges, and encamped at Jāfar Khān's garden early in January, 1748 A.D.[81]

By a mutual agreement, the 13th of January was fixed for a ceremonial interview of the Afghān chiefs and their followers with

79 *Ibid*; Siyar, Vol II, p. 558.

79a Wafā, f. 46A; Yusuf, f. 73; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 558.

79b *Ibid.* 80 *Ibid.* 81 *Ibid.*

Zainuddin in the *Chihil Satun* or Hall of Audience[82] at Patna.

Arrangements for a ceremonial interview of the Afghāns with Zainuddin at the *Chihil Satun*.

To create confidence in the minds of the Afghāns about his sincerity, Zainuddin passed a suicidal order that none of his soldiers should be present in the Hall of Audience.[83] Mahdi Nisār Khān, Khādem Husain Khān, Ahmad Khān Qureshi, and Rājah Sundar Singh, had been then absent from Patna on an expedition against the Zamindār of Seres and Cotombah; and the rest of the soldiers remaining there could not attend the *Chihil Satun* according to their master's order.[84] Only a few courtiers and clerks were allowed to be present there.[85]

Zainuddin's unwise policy of remaining undefended.

They were Muhammad Āskar Khān, Mir Murtazā, Muralidhar, the head of the espionage, Ramzāni, superintendent of arms, Sitārām, controller of accounts in the artillery department, Mir Abdullah, a prominent citizen of Patna, a few men of religious disposition like Shāh Bandagy and others, and two or three persons, who had come to pay respects to Zainuddin.[86] Thus, in his intense eagerness to fulfil his ambition, Zainuddin forgot to take even the most necessary precautions. But his fond hope to secure the help of the Afghāns was dashed to the ground, and he soon fell a prey to their conspiracy.

His hope for Afghān help was soon belied.

On the appointed day, Ahmad Pānie, Murād Sher, and Thākur Baheliā,[87] with 500 Afghāns, entered into the *Chihil*

[82] A palace of forty pillars occupied by the Deputy Governors of Bihār. It stood just behind the mosque of Saif Khān's *madrasah* (*vide ante*, p. 15). Buchanan remarked about it in 1811-12: "Chebel Sutoon, the palace of the Viceroy of Bihar, which has accommodated many personages of royal birth and which 50 years ago was in perfect preservation and occupied by the king's son (Shah Alam II), can now be scarcely traced in a few detached portions retaining no marks of grandeur."—Buchanan, Patna-Gaya Report, Vol. I, p. 71, published by the B. & O. Research Society in 1936.

[83] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 559; Yusuf, f. 73; Wafā, f. 49A.

[84] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 559.

[85] Yusuf, f. 73; Wafā, f. 49.

[86] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 559. One of them was Mahātāb Rāy, a *chhatri* by caste.

[87] Wafā, f. 48B. Thākur *Baheliā* was probably a *Baheliā* chief in alliance with the Afghāns of Bihar.

Satun to interview the Patna Governor, while Shamshir Khān arrived at the centre of the city, near the Kotwāl's *chabutarā*, with 3,000 or 4,000 Afghāns blocking the eastern gate and the main street leading to the palace. On hearing of Shamshir Khān's advance, Murād Sher asked his own followers to go out of the Hall in order to make room for those who were coming with that Afghān chief.[88] While taking leave of Zainuddin, an Afghān, named Abdur Rashid Khān, stabbed him with a dagger, but the blow had no effect as his hand was shaking from extreme nervousness.[89] Murād Sher then advanced to the spot, and with a violent blow of his sword cut Zainuddin's body into two parts.[90] His limbs were cut into pieces and buried in a plot of land, now known as *Maqberā-i-Haibāt Jang*, in the Begampur *mahallā* of the Patna city.[91] Zainuddin's tragic end excites pity indeed, but it should be noted that he was paid back in his own coin for having caused the murder of Rohsan Khān Terāhi on mere suspicion of conspiring against him.[91a] As a matter of fact, Rohsan Khān Terāhi's brutal assassination was one of the main causes of Afghān discontent, which had such a violent outburst in 1748.

Advance of the Afghān chiefs to interview Zainuddin;

Murād Sher cut him into two pieces.

A general confusion followed the murder of Zainuddin, and many of his officers and personal attendants were slain or wounded after some unsuccessful attempts for self-defence.[92] A few escaped being deprived of their arms and accoutrements.[93] In pursuance of a pre-arranged plan, Shamshir Khān and Sardār Khān entered Zainuddin's palace. The guards of the *zenānā* (female) apartment fled away, but Zainuddin's widow Aminā Begam had

A general confusion followed.

88 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 560.
89 *Ibid.*
90 *Ibid.*; Yusuf, f. 73; Wafā, f. 49B.
91 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 563.
91a *Vide ante*, p. 55.
92 Wafā, f. 50A; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 560.
93 *Ibid.*

the presence of mind to shut the gates and thus to prevent immediate plunder of the *harem*.[94] Then came the turn of Zainuddin's father, Hāji Ahmad, who had fanned the flame of ambition in the minds of his brother and his son. While the Afghāns had been entering the palace, Hāji Ahmad escaped through a breach in a wall and concealed himself in a neighbouring house.[95] He had an opportunity till 2 p.m. to run away to Bengal to join his brother, but his excessive love of wealth and women, even at the age of 90, prevented him from doing so,[96] till he was seized by the Afghāns and brought before Shamshir Khān towards the evening. The Afghāns tortured him for seventeen days to extort from him all information about his hidden treasure.[97] They found out 70 lacs of rupees in cash, and a vast quantity of jewels and bullion, lying hoarded beneath the stone of the Prophet's footprint in the palace. From Zainuddin's chamber they got about three lacs, according to one report, or several thousands, according to another.

Disgraceful treatment of Zainuddin's family.

Hāji Ahmad died on the 30th of January, 1748, from the effects of torture, and thus "gave the world an instance of the incompatibility of wickedness with happiness."[97a] His dead body was buried on the bank of the Ganges near the village Sābalpur, situated close to Jāfar Khān's garden.[98] Guards were placed over the mansions of Zainuddin and Hāji Ahmad, and members of their family became captives in the hands of the Afghāns.[99]

Death of Hāji Ahmad.

The Afghān usurpation of Patna for full three months brought untold miseries on her people.[100] The city was subjected

94 *Ibid*, p. 561.
95 *Ibid.*
96 Yusuf, f 74.
97 *Ibid*, f. 75; Siyar. Vol. II, p. 561.
97a Parker, The War in India, p. 28.
98 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 561.
99 *Ibid.*
100 I have discussed the economic effects of the Afghān insurrection of 1748 in Chapters VII and VIII.

to indiscriminate plundering, and the people had to pass their days and nights in extreme agony and fear. Ghulām Husain, a citizen of Patna, writes that the followers of Shamshir Khān and Bakhshi Baheliā "being restrained by no discipline, nor over-awed by any constraint, spread throughout every quarter of that unfortunate city, where not a day passed without some houses undergoing all the horrors of violence and defilement. Many families were dishonoured by them, and very few had the fortune to escape the infamous practices of that nation of miscreants." [101] Salimullah [102] gives a similar account: "They (the Afghāns) surrounded the houses of the rich men of the city and plundered these. The city and its environs fell a prey to their ravages; many lost their life, property and family-honour; and the signs of Doomsday came in." Wafā also states that the Afghāns "plundered everywhere, in every street and *bāzār* (of the city), and took away whatever they could find in the shape of cash or kind (money or grains, etc.). Murād Sher and Thākur Baheliā remained engaged for full one month in capturing the wealth of the citizens, and they extorted money from the bankers by posting reckless guards around their houses. Ahmad Pānie destroyed many merchants' shops; even the beggars and the vagabonds had to yield to him whatever they had. Many sought safety by leaving the city, and those who remained there lost both their honour and wealth." [103]

Miseries of the people of Patna due to Afghān usurpation for full three months.

Leaving his followers, like Murād Sher and others, in charge of the Patna city, Shamshir Khān fixed his camp in Jāfar Khān's garden.[104] With a view to opposing Alivardi, who, he knew, was sure to advance into Bihār to chastise him, he engaged himself in augmenting the number of the troops.[105]

Shamshir Khān gathered a strong force in his camp at Jāfar Khān's garden.

101 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 562. 102 f. 129 A. 103 fs 51A 5 B.
104 Yusuf, f. 74; Siyar, Vol. II, p 561.
105 *Ibid*; Wafā, f. 12B.

Practically the whole of Northern India was then infested with Afghāns. To recruit as many of them as possible, Shamshir Khān distributed money and favours unsparingly. Every day the inhabitants of Patna were terrified five or six times by the sound of kettle-drums, and on enquiry it was always found that some Afghān commander was marching through the city to the Afghān camp with so many men to join Shamshir Khān.[106] Thus Shamshir Khān and Murād Sher gathered 40,000 cavalry and almost the same number of infantry.[107] They had with them also a strong artillery which they has seized at Patna,[108] and the Marāthas under Mir Habib and Jānoji further reinforced them. On hearing that Alivardi had left his camp at Amāṇīganj for Bihār, Shamshir Khān and Murād Sher brought Aminā Begam, widow of Zainuddin, his little daughter, and his youngest son Mirzā Mahdi, out of their palace in the city of Patna, and carried them through the street to their own camp in Jāfar Khān's garden in a bullock cart, without any covering over it or curtains on its side, and thus exposing them before the citizens who terribly cursed the Afghān villains.[109]

The Marāthas combined with the Afghāns.

On the 30th of January, 1748,[110] Mirzā Hakim Beg reported to Alivardi the heart-rending news of the treacherous assassination of his nephew, the disgraceful end of his brother, and the humiliation of his daughter. These mishaps at first overwhelmed the Nawab with intense grief and despondency.[111] But he soon screwed up his courage, and decided upon taking the bold course of marching to Patna to recover it, to rescue his surviving relatives, who were prisoners in the hands of the Afghāns, and to avenge the death of his two near relatives.

Alivardi's determination to recover Bihār.

106 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 561.

107 *Ibid*, p. 563; Yusuf, f. 74. According to Wafā (f. 52B) 70,000 cavalry and 90,000 infantry; these seem to be rather exaggerated figures.

108 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 563. 109 *Ibid*. 110 Wafā, f. 50B.

111 Siyar, Vol. II, p 563; Riyāz, p. 357; Muzaffarnāmāh, f. 75A.

Having summoned a council of his friends and soldiers, he recounted before them all that had happened at Patna and signified to them his determination to fight his enemies and die a heroic death, if necessary, rather than submit to such indignities. He allowed them, however, a free choice either to retire home or to accompany him in that perilous undertaking.[112] All unanimously swore on the Korān to stand by him till the last moment of their life.[113] He assured his soldiers that he would clear off their arrear dues by instalments.[114] Financial help soon came from his daughter Ghasiṭi Begam and her consort Nawāzish Muhammad Khān, and also loans were raised from Jagat Seth Mahātābchānd (who paid 60 lacs of rupees) and other bankers. The soldiers at once received their dues in part.[115] Necessary arrangements were made by the Nawāb to enable his army to get timely supplies of provisions.[116] The defence of the city of Murshidābād was entrusted to Nawāzish Muhammad Khān and Atāullah Khān, under whom was placed a body of five or six thousand solidiers.[117]

He marched out of Murshidābād;

With these precautions, Alivardi left his camp at Amāṇīganj for Patna on the 29th of February, 1748,[118] with 15,000 or 16,000 cavalry and 20,000 infantry.[119] When he reached Komrah, 25 miles north of the Murshidābād city, on the 14th of March,[120] his soldiers refused to proceed further unless they received more money. They were, however, soon satisfied by the Nawāb, who resumed his march, and passing through Sakrigali on the 17th of March[121] reached Bhāgalpur, and thence advanced towards Monghyr. Fifteen hundred men sent by Saif Khān, Governor of Purneah, under Shaikh

halted at Monghyr;

112 Yusuf, f. 76; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 563.
113 *Ibid.*
114 *Ibid.*
115 *Ibid*, p. 564.
116 *Ibid.*
117 *Ibid.*
118 Consultations, 8th March, 1748.
119 Yusuf, f. 77.
120 Consultations, 19th March, 1748.
121 Consultations, 24th March, 1748.

Din Muhammad, joined him on the way near Sultāngañj.[122] He had also appealed to the Peshwā Bālāji Rao for assistance by promising him the *chauth* of Bengal, and the latter was reported to be "within a few days' march from Patna."[123] The Nawāb halted at Monghyr for a few days to give some rest to his fatigued soldiers, and was joined there by Rājah Sundar Singh of Tikāri with 1,500 cavalry and some infantry, and also by Kāmgār Khān Mayi, the Zamindar of Narhaṭ and Samai.[124] The avenging Bengal army marched from Monghyr with a remarkable speed and soon reached Bārh on the Ganges, 34 miles east of Patna.[125] The allied Afghān and Marātha troops also advanced towards Bārh to oppose the Bengal army.[126] Shamshir Khān left behind his *diwān* Ahmad Khān Qureshi in charge of Patna.

arrived near Bārh.

The Nawāb had marched keeping the Ganges close on his right side.[127] Just to the west of the city of Bārh, the Ganges divided itself into many branches enclosing several *diārās* or islands. The northernmost channel formed the stream of the Ganges, and about two miles to the south of it ran a narrow stream through the old bed of the Ganges. There was one ford over the narrow stream, a few miles west of the Bārh town. The Afghāns had made a strong entrenchment here with their big guns, in order to oppose the advance of their enemy.[127a] Alivardi did not deem it prudent to risk a sudden assault in front, but moved southwards for two miles under the direction of a local Zamindār, crossed the same stream at another ford, not known to the Afghāns, and arrived near the enemy's entrenched position. At this manœuvre, the

122 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 565; Yusuf, f. 78.
123 Consultations, 25th February, 1748.
124 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 565; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 72A.
125 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 565; Yusuf, f. 78; Wafā, f. 54B.
126 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 566.
127 *Ibid.*
127a *Ibid.*

Afghāns hurriedly deserted that position leaving behind all their guns, and ran away westwards to a place opposite the new position of Alivardi. Alivardi passed the whole night in sleepless vigilance, taking every precaution against a sudden attack. At dawn, he prayed fervently to God for success in the battle of the coming day, and rubbed his forehead with a sacred piece of earth of the grave of Imām Husain at Karbalā.[128]

The battle of Rāṇīsarāi.

In the morning of the 16th April, 1748,[129] Alivardi moved to the village of Rāṇīchock or Rāṇīsarāi, eight miles west of Bārh, and drew up his army on the adjacent plain.[130] Bābādur Ali Khān was posted in front of all with the Nawāb's big artillery; behind these were placed the lighter pieces in charge of Hāider Ali Khān, Raham Khān, Mir Kāzim Khān, and Dost Muhammad Khān; and then stood the cavalry and the infantry of the vanguard under the command of Sayeed Ahmad Khān, Allah Yār Khān, Mirzā Iraj Khān, Rājah Sundar Singh, and Kāmgār Khān Mayi. The Nawāb took his position in the centre of all, having Umar Khān and his four sons, Asālat Khān, Diler Khān, Ahmad Khān, and Muhammad Khān, close to him.[131] The main body of the Afghāns had arranged themselves, opposite the Bengal army, in a long line extending for nearly three miles eastwards from Rāṇīsarāi, while the allied Marāthas stood forming an angle with this line in front of the left wing of the Nawāb's army. The left wing of the Afghān army under the command of Hayāt Khān, with some big guns, went across a narrow stream flowing there into the Ganges, in order to open fire on the right wing of the Bengal army when it would appear opposite it.

The battle commenced with a brisk cannonade. A cannon-ball soon blew up the head of Sardār Khān, who was reputed to be bolder than Shamshir Khān and commanded nearly half

128 *Ibid.*
129 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748.
130 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 566.
131 *Ibid.*

the Afghān army.[132] This disheartened the soldiers of his division and made them waver. Haider Ali Khān, with his musketeers, at once fell upon them, and discharging volley after volley into their ranks darkened the light of the day with clouds of smoke. The Afghāns being thus put to confusion, Alivardi ordered Shāh Jahānyār and Fakhrullah Beg Khān to charge them, but they did not move at all. At this time the Marāthas, with a view to creating a diversion in favour of their allies, attacked Alivardi's baggage in the rear and even advanced near the centre. Sirājuddaulah, who was near his grandfather, took fright and requested him to chase them away immediately. But paying no heed to this the Nawāb ordered the vanguard of his army to charge the Afghāns directly, and personally proceeded behind it. Some of his generals, mounted on elephants, rushed valiantly into the ranks of the enemy. The fighting became close, every soldier being engaged with his adversary standing over against him. Wounded by a musket-ball, Murād Sher Khān fell into the *howdah* of his elephant, when two generals of the Nawāb, Mir Kāzim Khān and Dost Muhammad Khān, jumped upon the animal. Even in that wounded condition Murād Sher Khān cut off with his sabre some fingers of Mir Kāzim Khān, but instantly his head was severed from his body by Dost Muhammad Khān. At the same time Shamshir Khān also fell wounded from his elephant, and a follower of Diler Khān, a general of the Nawāb, immediately cut off his head. Utterly disconcerted at the death of their leaders, the Afghāns took to flight, and their allies, the Marāthas, who had taken no active part in the fighting of the day, also dispersed from the field. The Nawāb then possessed himself of the enemy's camp. After a few days' halt at Baikanṭhpur on the bank of the Ganges, five miles east of Fatwah, he entered Patna triumphantly

Death of Sardār Khan.

Death of Murād Sher Khān and Shamshir Khān.

[132] *Ibid.*

and his heart leapt with an ecstasy of joy to find his daughter and other relatives alive. The citizens of Patna, high and low alike, participated in profound rejoicing at this passing away of the Afghān menace, which had been hanging over their head like the sword of Damocles for three months.[133]

Alivardi's chivalrous treatment of the female members of Shamshir Khān.

Alivardi deputed a batch of faithful men to Dārbhangā to seize the goods and effects of the Afghāns. The women of the family of Shamshir Khān had been kept under the protection of the Rājah of Bettiah, who requested the Nawāb to let them go away to some other place. But his request was not complied with. Besides sending a party of men to bring over the females of the Afghān chief, the Nawāb personally crossed the Ganges and proceeded towards Bettiah on the plea of a hunting excursion but in reality to intimidate the *Rājah*, who thereupon made over the widow and the daughter of Shamshir Khān to the Nawāb's people. The Nawāb treated them with kindness and due respect, admitting them into his *zenānā* and making suitable provision for their ease and comfort.[134] He got the daughter of Shamshir Khān married, with the consent of her relatives, to an Afghān of noble birth, named Shāh Muhammad Ishaq, and permitted them, and also the widow of Shamshir Khān, to return to Dārbhangā, where some villages were granted to them for their maintenance.[135] This generous conduct of Alivardi towards the women of his fallen foe stands in a striking contrast to the brutal treatment of his daughter and other relatives by the Afghān rebels at Patna.

Alivardi stayed at Patna and arranged for the administration of Bihār.

Alivardi stayed at Patna for six months to arrange for the proper administration of Bihār. His grandson Sirājuddaulah was appointed the nominal Deputy Governor of Bihār, while the actual business of administration was entrusted to Rājah Jānkīrām as his (Sirājuddaulah's) deputy. The Nawāb

133 *Ibid*, pp. 566-67. 134 *Ibid*. 135 *Ibid*.

left Patna with both Sayeed Ahmed Khān and Sirājuddaulah on the 6th November, 1748. He was received at Bhagwāngolā by Nawāzish Muhammad, Husain Quli Khān, and some other prominent citizens of Murshidābād, and entered his capital in triumph on the 30th November, 1748.[135] He attributed his victory over the Afghāns and the miraculous recovery of Bihār entirely to the grace of God, and once again sent up a fervent prayer to Him, as he had done the night preceding the commencement of the battle of Rāṇīsarāi.

His return to Murshidābād in November, 1748.

The Afghān insurrection of 1748 in Bihār was indeed a calamity of an exceptional kind for Alivardi. It did not merely cause immense personal losses to him in men and money and a tremendous humiliation to his family, but it was also a sort of direct challenge to his rule. It gathered strength from the support of Afghān adventurers from different parts of Northern India, and was largely influenced [137] by the exploits of Ahmad Shāh Abdāli, the ruler of Afghānisthān, who after capturing Kābul, Qandahār, and Lāhore had been advancing towards Delhi, and also of another Afghān chief, Ali Muhammad Ruhelā, who, passing from Sirhind through Sahāranpur to Bareilly, had made himself master of Rohilkhand (February, 1748). In fact, this period was marked by the revival of the Afghāns both in the North-Western tablelands and in the plains of India, and they made a fresh bid for power on the ruins of the Empire of the Mughals, who had wrested the sovereignty of Hindusthān from them at the field of Panipath in 1526 and 1556 A.D. Throughout the reigns of the Great Mughals they remained a restive and rebellious set, a thorn by the side of the alien empire, and Aurangzeb's policy further disaffected the Afghāns and Pāṭhāns from Kābul to Lāhore, with disastrous results for the Mughal army. The Afghāns were one amongst the principal fellers of the decayed

Afghān bid for power.

[136] *Vide ante*, p. 22.

[137] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 106.

tree of the Mughal Empire. They had often regarded other Muslims from beyond the Hindukush as interlopers in India, and had taken up an almost national attitude by putting themselves in opposition to every such alien power or adventurer and fortune-hunter, such as Alivardi Khān was.

This Afghān bid for supremacy was indeed a potent factor in the history of India during the rest of the 18th century. It accelerated the dismemberment of the Mughal Empire, indirectly helped the rise of the Sikhs, but seriously opposed the ambition of the north-pushing Marāthas at the field of Panipath in January, 1761, and kept the East India Company in Bengal in constant anxiety and influenced their N. W. frontier policy and relations with the native states till the days of Zamān Shāh (1793-1800). In the critical year 1757, the Council in Calcutta exclaimed: " . . . by the favour and goodness of God, Abdali is returning by continual marches to his own countries."[138] The Durrāni menace continued to haunt the imagination of the British statesmen in India in subsequent years. Lord Wellesley claims to have removed it by sending two missions to Persia, first of Mehdi Ali Khān and then of Captain Malcolm.[139]

[138] Proceedings of the Select Committee, 21st February-26th December, 1757.

[139] Wellesley's letter to the Secret Committee in London, 28th September, 1801.—Owen, Wellesley Despatches, p. 610.

CHAPTER V

Alivardi and the European Traders

The English, the French, and the Dutch were then the principal European traders in Bengal besides the minor ones, like the Danes, the Prussians and the Portuguese.[1] Alivardi knew it well that it was necessary for him to look after the traders in his province for its economic interests. "He understood perfectly well," remarks M. Jean Law, the then chief of the French factory at Cāssimbāzār, "the interests of his Government, favoured the poor merchants, and administered justice when complaints succeeded in reaching him."[2] The Council in Calcutta remarked in 1747 that it had been "customary at these Durbars (*darbārs* of the Nawāb and the Deputy Nawābs) to allow merchants to settle their accounts in a fair manner whenever it has been required by either party.[2a] Scrafton writes that Alivardi "used to compare the Europeans to a hive of bees of whose honey you might reap the benefit, but that if you disturbed their hive they would sting you to death."[3] Thus when hard pressed by the Marātha invasions of Bengal, he exacted contributions from the English, the French, and the Dutch, his object was not to injure 'the hive of bees' but only to 'reap a benefit' as a bee-keeper.

The Marātha invasions heavily taxed the financial resources of Bengal. The Nawāb, therefore, had to ask the European trading companies to render him pecuniary help for the safety of the province, where "they participated of (in) the protection of his arms"[4] and enjoyed the profits of trade.[5] In July, 1744

1 Letter to Court, 11th December, 1741, paras. 106 and 135; *Ibid*, 3rd August, 1744, paras 14, 15, 16; *Ibid*, 20th August, 1751, para. 46.

2 Hill, Vol. III. p. 160.

2a Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 189.

3 Scrafton, R. I., p. 52. 4 Orme, Vol. II, pp. 45-46. 5 Hill, Vol. III, p. 289.

A.D., he accused the English of assisting the Marāthas, and pointed out that "the English (who now) carried on the Trade of the whole World, used (formerly) to have 4 or 5 ships, but now brought 40 or 50 sails, which belonged not to the Company . . . ."[6] They were ordered not to carry on their trade in Bengal unless and until they had supplied him with three millions of rupees to clear off two months' arrear pay of his soldiers. Some of their *gomastās* were actually arrested, and military guards were posted at the *gurrah aurungs*.[7] Preet Cotmah, one of the Company's *gomastās*, was tortured till he agreed to pay Rs. 1,35,000 and was delivered to another tormentor to make him agree to pay 3 lacs more ; Narsingh Dās, a *dadni*-merchant's *gomastā*, was harshly treated ; Bally Cotmah, another *gomastā* of the English, took shelter at Cāssimbāzār and Kebalrām, a Cāssimbāzār merchant, was arrested.

Alivardi's exactions from the English, the French, and the Dutch during the Marātha invasions.

In these circumstances, the Council in Calcutta permitted the Cāssimbāzār factors to offer the Nawāb from 40,000 to 50,000 rupees through the good offices and mediation of Jagat Seth Fatehchānd and Chinrāy (?).[8] But Fatehchānd did not consider this sum sufficient to satisfy the Nawāb. He observed[9] that if he were authorised "to offer five (lacs) he would endeavour to prevail on the Nabob (Nawāb) to accept it, the French and the Dutch had already agreed to pay their share on the Nabob's settling with the English, and that in Shuja Daulet's (Shujāuddin's) time a much larger sum was paid . . . ." The Council in Calcutta then ordered Mr. Forster, chief of the Cāssimbāzār factory, to offer Rs. 1,00,000 to the Nawāb, and accordingly their *vakils* were sent to the Nawāb's *darbār*. But the Nawāb told them that "the English carried on the Trade of the whole country, yet

Attempt of the English to satisfy the Nawāb.

6 Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para. 24.

7 Letter to Court, 8th November, 1744, para 3. *Aurung*, or *arang*, a place where any article of trade was manufactured and collected for wholesale di-posal or export.

8 Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para. 24.

9 *Ibid*, paras. 26 and 27.

paid no customs (and) secreted many of the Riots," and demanded that Bally Cotmah should be delivered up to him, threatening them at the same time that he would "surround all the Factorys and prevent them getting provisions, and if that did not make them comply with his demand, (then he) would seize all their Money and Goods at the *Aurungs*." [10]

When the matter was again referred to Fatehchānd and Chinrāy, they informed the Company's *vakils* that the Nawāb "would not be content with Two or Three lacks (lacs), (he) being obliged to get sufficient to pay the troops even at the Risque (risk) of his life; the Military officers were impatient and daily importuned him to give orders to fall on the English and the *Aurungs*." [11] They, therefore, asked the Company to offer speedily any amount that might satisfy him. After considering the pros and cons of the matter, and apprehending a general loss of investments, the Council in Calcutta requested Sayeed Ahmad Khān, by paying him a large sum of money, to intercede for them before the Nawāb. Sayeed Ahmad Khān promised to procure *parwānahs* [12] for the currency of business in return for four lacs of rupees. But he could not make good his promise. So Mr. Forster paid a visit to the Nawāb agreeably to the instructions of the Council in Calcutta, dated the 28th August, 1744 A.D.[13] He was graciously received by the Nawāb, who presented him with a *Seerpaw* (*sarapā*, a full *khelat* or dress of honour), and succeeded in effecting a settlement with him in the month of September by agreeing to pay three lacs and a half. The Cāssimbāzār factors had to pay an additional amount of Rs. 30,500 to the Nawāb's generals and officers.[14] The

Mr. Forster's visit to the Nawāb and his settlement with him.

[10] Letter to Court, 8th November, 1744, para. 3.
[11] *Ibid*, para. 5.
[12] *Parwānah*, a letter from a man in power to a dependant, etc.
[13] Letter to Court, 8th November, 1744, para. 10.
[14] Letter to Court, 9th February, 1745, para. 76.

Patna factors had also to pay Rs, 5,000 to the Nawāb and Rs. 3,000 to his officers, besides signing a paper for the rent of their factory at Chuprah town at the rate of Rs. 4,537-9-6 pies [15]; and the Dacca factors too were obliged to pay Rs. 5,000. [16] A fine horse was also presented to the Nawāb which cost the Company 2,500 Madras rupees. The restrictions on the Company's trade were then removed and its *gomastās* were released.

Fresh troubles in 1748.

But four years had scarcely elapsed before fresh troubles arose. In the year 1748 Commodore Griffin, or some men of his squadron, captured some trading vessels [16a] of the Armenian and the Mughal merchants in Bengal, who thereupon appealed to the Nawāb for redress.[17] The Nawāb at once sent a *parwānah* to Mr. Barwell, the Company's Governor in Calcutta, to the following effect: "The Syads (Arabs), Moghuls (Mughals), Armenians, etc., merchants of Houghly (Hugli), have compalined that laks (lacs) of Goods and Treasure with their ships you have seized and plundered, and I am informed from foreign parts that ships bound to Houghly you seized on under pretence of their belonging to the French. The ship belonging to Antony [17a] with laks (lacs) on Board from Mochel,[17b] and several curiosities sent me by the Sheriff of that place [17c] on that ship you have also seized and plundered. These merchants are the Kingdom's benefactors, their Imports and Exports are an advantage to all

15 *Ibid*, paras. 77-78. It is not distinctly stated in the records whether the rent referred to was annual or otherwise.

16 *Ibid*, para 79.

16a This is a very rare reference to the fact that the Armenians were not confined to an Asiatic overland trade with India, but were also engaged in Indian overseas trade possessing ships of their own—and also to the fact that in addition to Mughal naval patrols in the Deltaic waters, directed against Portuguese or Arakanese piracy, there were Mughal trading vessels at the Bengal ports. The Araba (Sayyids) also continued to trade in Bengal as late as the middle of the 18th century.

17 Consultations, May 15, June 1, and July 13, 1748 ; Hill, Vol. III, p. 289.

17a Apparently an Armenian.

17b Mochel = Mocha, the Red sea port in Western Arabia.

17c This shows connection of Bengal court with West Asiatic potentates.

men, and their complaints are so grievous that I cannot forbear any longer giving ear to them. As you were not permitted to commit piracies, therefore, I now write to you that on receipt of this you deliver up all the Merchants' Goods and effects to them as also what appertains unto me, otherwise you may be assured a due chastisement in such manner as you least expect." [18] As the Court of Directors had then sent 'peremptory' orders to the Council in Calcutta not to comply with the demands of the Bengal Government, Mr. Barwell did not act according to the Nawāb's orders.[19] He replied that the goods had been seized by a King's ship over which he had no control, and that the French, who had been at war with the English, had also captured some goods of the Armenians mistaking these for their enemy's goods.[20]

The Nawāb's repressive measures against the English traders.

But this did not satisfy the Nawāb, who soon adopted various repressive measures against the English traders in their different factories. The merchants and *gomastās* of the company at Māldah complained that some officers of the Nawāb had treated them harshly for their refusal to meet their exorbitant demands for money.[21] The Dacca and Jugdeā factories had to suffer much for want of 'common subsistence,' as supply of food had been obstructed by the Nawāb's officers. These officers took '*mutchullacas*' (written aggreements) not only from all the traders and *poddārs* not to have any transaction with the English factors at Dacca, but also from the *moodys* (grocers) not to supply them with provisions and other necessaries.[22] This occasioned "a kind of mutiny" amongst the soldiers and peons of the Dacca factors, and compelled them to send a message to the Nawāb's *darbār* "that if provisions were stopped they must

[18] Consultations, January 11, 1749.
[19] Hill, Vol. III, p. 289.
[20] I. D. R., Bengal and Madras papers, Vol. II.
[21] Consultations, 2nd May, 1748.
[22] Consultations, 23rd January, 1749.

get them wherever they could, for it was better to die fighting than starving, upon which a small allowance was suffered to be brought in." [23] But they still apprehended that in a day or two the supply of provisions might be completely cut off causing a mutiny among the soldiers, who had already been discontented on account of not having received their arrear pay.

Towards the beginning of May, 1748, the Council in Calcutta requested Nawāzish Muhammad Khān and Chamerage (Syāmrāj ?) to write to the Nawāb (who was then at Patna) for a remedy. They expressed their willingness to comply with the Council's request, but apprehended that the Nawāb was then in such a disturbed state of mind, due to the recent Afghān insurrection in Bihār, that "their writing to him would avail but little." [24] But Mr. Wadham Brooke, who had been appointed Chief of the factory at Cāssimbāzar in March, 1746, believed that in view of the Bihār disasters,[25] the Nawāb would not then "pursue violent measures, but that he may be kept in temper upon pretty easy terms, at least till a more favourable opportunity offers." [25a] So he suggested to the Council in Calcutta on the 2nd January, 1749, that an attempt should be made to satisfy the Nawāb by presenting to him a fine Arab horse that was to be then disposed of in Calcutta, and that the demand of Hāji Ahmad for an annual present (to himself) of 3,600 rupees should be complied with before they could expect "a currency to business." [26] The Council approved of his plan of keeping the Nawāb satisfied if it could be done on reasonable terms, and sent him the Arab horse for presentation to the Nawāb at a suitable opportunity.[27]

Attempt of the English to satisfy the Nawāb and to settle their dispute with him through some of his relatives and officers.

23 *Ibid.*
24 Consultations, 2nd May, 1748.
25 *Vide ante*, pp. 134-36.
25a Consultations, 9th January, 1749.
26 *Ibid.*
27 Letter to Court, 27th January, 1749.

Efforts of Wadham Brooke to conciliate the Nawāb.

Mr. Wadham Brooke also tried, through the Seths and some officers of the Nawāb like "Hukum Beg" (Hakim Beg), Kāruli Beg, Birām Dutt (? Biru Dutt), Ghulām Husain, and others, to find out the Nawāb's "views and ends in endeavouring thus to distress the Company's affairs," and also to ascertain what would satisfy him.[28] In March, 1749, Kāruli Beg came to the English factory at Cāssimbāzār and informed the officers there of the Nawāb's desire that the English should satisfy the Armenians without further delay, and of his order for quartering two hundred *Buxeries* (matchlockmen recruited from Buxar) on that factory.[29] He also voluntarily offered to act as a mediator between them and the Armenians and to help them to the best of his ability.[30] According to his advice, Mr. Wadham Brooke wrote to his authorities in Calcutta on the 24th April, 1749, that they should procure a paper signed by the Armenians who resided there, in the form of an address from them to the Nawāb, expressing therein their satisfaction regarding their losses caused by the English.[31] He also informed them that the general opinion about the Nawāb's distressing the Company's affairs was that he wanted from each party (both the Company and the Armenians) a sum of money, which was some time ago believed to be 50,000 rupees[32]; and that before they could know with certainty what he wanted, offers must first come from their side.[33] The Council in Calcutta asked the Armenian merchants to put their signatures on a paper, drawn up agreeably to Mr. Wadham Brooke's suggestion, when they attended it (probably by invitation) on the 1st June, 1749, but they declared their unwillingness to do so.[34] At this, the majority in the Council informed the Armenians that if the English were compelled to pay any sum to the Nawāb

28 Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749.
29 *Ibid.*
30 *Ibid.*
31 *Ibid*; Consultations, 4th May, 1749.
32 *Ibid.*
33 *Ibid.*
34 Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749.

and they refused to pay the same amount to them, then they would be expelled from Calcutta after the expiry of two months. One member, named Mr. William Kempe, even expressed the opinion that "the staying (of) two months may impede the Company's business, so far as to prevent . . . getting a tonnage for the shipping; therefore they (ultimately) ought to be forced to satisfy the Nabab (Nawāb) immediately." But the Council was wise enough not to take any drastic steps which might prejudice its interests more seriously. It only informed Mr. Wadham Brooke of the Armenians' refusal to sign the document of satisfaction, and at the same time communicated to him that Mr. Henry Kelsal, chief of the factory at Balasore, had been ordered to endeavour to satisfy the Nawāb, who had then gone there in pursuit of the Marāthas.[35] Mr. Wadham Brooke was also directed to try his level best to have the restrictions on English trade removed by offering to the Nawāb's government, if necessary, as much as 15,000 or 20,000 rupees.[36] He replied on the 14th June that he had consulted the Seths and Bīrām Dutt, who had told him that nothing could be done before the Nawāb's return to Murshidābād. He also expressed the opinion that 15,000 or 20,000 rupees would be insufficient (if the Nawāb should favour them so far as to take nothing for himself) to satisfy the military guards billeted on the Cāssimbāzār factory, and hence requested the Council in Calcutta to let him know the maximum amount that the Company was ready to pay the Nawāb in order to regain freedom of trade as soon as possible after his return to the capital.[37]

The Nawāb at Balasore.

In the meanwhile, Mr. Kelsal had approached the Nawāb at Balasore on the 9th of June, and handed over to him a letter from the President of the Council in Calcutta, drawing his attention to the "bad consequences attending . . . Company's affairs . . . from

Mr. Kelsal's visit to the Nawāb at Balasore.

35 *Vide ante*, pp. 107-08.

36 Consultations, 1st June, 1749.

37 Consultations, 19th June, 1749; Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749.

the unjust complaints of the Armenians and others and to their hardships on account of soldiers being posted at the Cāssimbāzār factory," and at the same time requesting him to permit " the Company's affairs to go on in the usual manner without any further molestation." [38] He put forward every possible argument to convince the Nawāb " how prejudicial this stoppage of business would be to his revenues as well as (to) the Company." The Nawāb then assured him that he would try to redress the grievances of the English on his return to Murshidābād, and desired him to transport his (the Nawāb's) ammunition and cannon (by sea and East India Company vessels) to Calcutta as soon as possible, as these could not be carried with him owing to the bad condition of the roads during the rains.[39] Mr. Kelsal acted accordingly.[39a]

Mr. Kelsal's help to him.

After the Nawāb's return to Murshidābād at the beginning of July, 1749, the President of the Council in Calcutta wrote to him a congratulatory letter: " I am extremely well pleased our chief at Balasore Mr. Kelsal has rendered himself agreeable and esteem myself greatly obliged by the favours you have been pleased to confer on him. The palanqueen (palanquin), bamboo, and other things that your Excellency committed to his care arrived on a sloop which sloop with those things on board I immediately despatched to Houghly (Hugli) Phousdar (*faujdar*), what still remains at Ballasore (Balasore), on their arrival here, shall be also forwarded to him." [40] On the 7th

Return of the Nawāb to Murshidābād and further attempts of the English to satisfy him.

[38] *Vide* Appendix B.

[39] Consultations, 19th June, 1749 A.D.; Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749.

[39a] The remnants of the Mughal fleet in Bengal water-were clearly useless after Aurangzeb's time. An Orissā expedition required a sea line of communication as a second alternative to fall back upon. Alivardi felt its need, but in his days the Bengal Government had neglected the navy to the point of extinction, and so in necessity he had to look round for foreign naval help, and luckily found a very convenient party to compel to render that service.

[40] Consultations, 6th July, 1749.

August, 1749, the Chief of the Cāssimbāzār factory sent '*vakils*' (representatives) to wait on the Nawāb. He asked the '*vakils*' if they had procured the "*Raudjee-Nomma*," *i.e.*, the deed of agreement, from the Armenians in Calcutta. They replied that the Armenians did not execute any such deed for fear of being obliged thereby to pay the '*choute*' (?).[41] The Nawāb remarked that he would give them a '*muchlaca*' (a written obligation or bond) in his own handwriting not to take a single rupee from them and spoke much in commendation of Mr. Kelsal.[42] This attitude of the Nawāb led the Chief of the Cāssimbāzār factory to believe that Mr. Kelsal would be the most 'acceptable' and proper person to effect a satisfactory settlement with the Nawāb, and so on the 10th of August he wrote to the Council in Calcutta to depute him immediately to the Nawāb. The Council promptly acted up to his suggestion and sent Mr. Kelsal to the Nawāb's *darbār*.[43] He was warmly received there, and availed himself of that opportunity to present a petition to the Nawāb, setting forth in the strongest possible terms "the Company's great sufferings since the business was first stopped, and the little foundation the Armenians had for their complaints, herewith the Company had nothing to do."[44] But this did not produce the desired effect; for, on perusing the petition, the Nawāb replied that the Armenians must be satisfied.[45]

The Cāssimbāzār factors then went to Hukum Beg (Hakim Beg) and Kāruli Beg, who really controlled the whole matter, and by agreeing to offer 15,000 or 20,000 rupees to the Nawāb, they requested them to get it settled in their favour.[46] But these two men, being of an extremely mercenary nature and intending to squeeze out some money for themselves, rejected

41 It is not clear what is referred to by this word "choute." Perhaps the frequent ncursions of the Marāthas had familiarised the people with this term and it was loosely used for any kind of forced contribution.

42 Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749.

43 *Ibid.*

44 Consultations, 31st August, 1749.

45 *Ibid.*

46 *Ibid.*

their offer "as being far short of what the Nawāb would expect." At this they agreed to pay one lac of rupees to the Nawāb and 20,000 rupees to Hukum Beg (Hakim Beg) and other officers,[47] whereupon Hukum Beg (Hakim Beg) promised "to procure them the Perwannahs (*parwānahs*) as soon as the Dusserah[48] was over." But as the Nawāb was confined to his room by sickness, he could not gain access to him.[49] Apprehending that any further delay might greatly add to the distress of the Company's trade in Bengal, the Cāssimbāzār factors sent their *vakils* to Hukum Beg (Hākim Beg) and Kāruli Beg to enquire if the Nawāb's order could not be obtained by writing to him that they had consented to comply with his demand. They were informed in reply that "as the complaints of the Armenians made great noise at Muxadavad (Murshidābād), the Nabob (Nawāb) first of all required them to appear before all the Durbar (*darbār*) whilst he was present and publicly acknowledge themselves to be satisfied for their losses . . . ."[50]

What happened after these repeated demands for the satisfaction of the Armenians does not appear from the records available. But as soon as the Nawāb recovered from his illness, he held a *darbār* in the night of 15th October, 1749, where the leading Armenian merchants appeared and expressed their satisfaction regarding their losses caused by the English.[51] They must, therefore, have been satisfied more or less in the manner required. The Nawāb then issued orders for removing the restrictions that had been put on the English Company's trade and for withdrawing his soldiers from their

Satisfaction of the Armenians; the Nawāb pacified, and currency to English trade regained.

[47] Consultations, 18th September, 1749.

[48] The Durgā Pujā festival, which is celebrated in Bengal in the month of October or September. We have descriptions of this festival in several contemporary accounts, *e.g.*, in 'Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa,' and in 'Voyage of Harmich to India in 1745-49,' *Bengal: Past and Present*, April-June, 1933.

[49] Consultations, 18th October, 1749 [50] *Ibid.*

[51] Consultations, 20th October, 1749.

factories. But when the *darbār* was over Hukum Beg (Hākim Beg) gave the English to understand that "before these orders could be executed, the Rs. 1,20,000 must be paid or security given for it." [52] The English had been already suffering from great pecuniary wants, especially because the Seths of Murshidābād had adopted a stern attitude and had expressed their unwillingness to lend them any further amount. But after earnest requests they were able to borrow from them one lac and fifty thousand rupees, [53] out of which the Nawāb's demand was met. The Nawāb became completely satisfied with the English Company in course of three years and issued a *parwānah* in favour of its trade on the 8th October, 1752. [54]

The Company borrowed money from the Seths to satisfy the Nawāb's demand.

While trying to control the trade of the Europeans in his province, Alivardi was also always on the alert to prevent them from being able to establish their political influence there. During the Anglo-French conflicts in Southern India, he closely watched their movements so that they might not jump into the field of politics in Bengal, as they had done in the Deccan. "He saw with equal indignation and surprise," remarks M. Jean Law, "the progress of the French and the English nations on the Coromandal coast as well as in the Deccan, for by means of his spies he was informed of everything that happened there . . . . He feared that sooner or later the Europeans would attempt similar enterprises in his government." [55] Thus, on hearing that the English and the French had begun erecting fortifications in Calcutta and Chandernagore respectively, he passed definite orders for demolishing these, [56] just as Murshid Quli Jāfar Khān had stopped the con-

Alivardi closely watched the movements of the Europeans in Bengal during the Anglo French conflicts in Southern India.

52 *Ibid.*
53 *Ibid.*
54 *Vide* Appendix C.
55 Hill, Vol. III, pp. 160-61.
56 *Ibid.*

struction of forts by the English East India Company in Bengal in 1718 A.D.[57] "You are merchants," he often said to the English and French *vakils*, "what need have you of a fortress? Being under my protection you have no enemies to fear."[58]

To save his province, already devastated by the Marāthas,[59] from further ravages of war, Alivardi followed a policy of strict neutrality during the Deccan wars. He paid no heed to a letter of the French commander, Bussy, soliciting his alliance against the English.[60] He tried to enforce this policy of neutrality also on the Europeans in Bengal, and in July, 1745, issued a *parwānah* forbidding the English, the French, and the Dutch to commit "any hostilities against each other in his dominions."[61] He definitely fixed the Point Palmyras as the place from where neutrality should be observed.[62]

Alivardi followed a policy of strict neutrality.

Probably, as a result of this policy there were no violent ruptures among the Europeans in Bengal during his regime, though their relations elsewhere had been hostile, and here also they kept themselves fully ready for an emergency, and once actually violated the neutrality of the Ganges. In consequence of French hostility against the Dutch in Europe, the Dutch Government in the Netherlands despatched strict orders to their President at Chinsurā, in April, 1748, "prohibiting all manner of correspondence between their settlement and that of Chandernagore."[63] Apprehending a French attack upon Chinsurā, the Dutch there allied themselves with the English.[64] Thus the two forgot

No violent ruptures in Bengal.

57 Wilson, Vol. III, p. 45.

58 Hill, Vol. III. p. 161.

59 *Vide ante*, Chapter III.

60 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 611.

61 Orme, Indostan, Vol. II, pp. 45-56; Correspondance du Conseil de Chandernagor avec divers, 2e partie, p. 350.

62 *Ibid.* Point Palmyras is a promontory and a small town on the coast of the Bay of Bengal to the south of Balasore.

63 Consultations, 16th May, 1748.

64 Consultations, July, 1748.

for the time being their commercial rivalry to meet their common enemy, the French. Mr. Huyghens, the Dutch Director at Chinsurā, wrote to Mr. William Barwell, the English Governor in Calcutta, in July, 1748, that he had passed necessary orders for his ships going down to Barānagore, and that he was ready to issue further orders for their proceeding to Calcutta to help the English in case the French attacked that place, provided the English gave him sufficient assurance that they would not take into their service, or grant refuge to, any of the sailors or others belonging to the ships sent for their assistance but would deliver them up on demand.[65] Nearly a month later, an unhappy incident was about to break up this Anglo-Dutch alliance. A Dutch boat, which was ordered to bring up three sick sailors from one of their ships lying at Fultā, was attacked, just below Calcutta, by some armed sailors from an English ship which lay at anchor there. They took away three sailors, one of whom was George Jansen of Dutch nationality, and wounded a '*mājhi*' (helmsman) and a peon in such a way that "the latter fell overboard and in all appearence went down the water and the former died there of his wounds." At this Mr. Huyghens wrote to the Council of the English in Calcutta that the English Company should "give to the Netherlands Company, whose colour has been scandalised by the violence committed, a due satisfaction (which they hereby demand) by ordering malefactors to be punished in a most severe manner, that others may be terrified and constrained from undertaking the like, and any other violence against their boats . . . . " He also demanded that George Jansen and another sailor, named Hordonk, who had deserted the Dutch ship 'Cost Capelle' on the 25th August, 1748, and were then in the military service of the English Company, should be delivered up to him. The President and Council in Calcutta satisfied most of his demands,[66] and

Anglo-Dutch alliance against the French.

[65] *Ibid.*

[66] Consultations, September, 1748.

thus prevented an open rupture, to the interest of both the parties against the French. Towards the end of that year, the French forcibly took possession of the Dutch Company's garden of Champonade,[67] whereupon Mr. Huyghens wrote a letter to Mr. Renault, the French Chief at Chandernagore, on the 13th January, 1749, protesting against the conduct of his men in thus violating the neutrality of the Ganges.[68] The French Chief replied to him on the 15th January to the following effect :— "Permit us to tell you that your protests do not appear to us well-founded. It is you gentleman who were the first to have violated the neutrality by breaking with us all communication, a procedure which ought to have caused us all the more astonishment, as intercourse between our two establishments has never been interrupted even in times of war. The step which we have just taken is only too well justified by your conduct and by the situation of your garden so near our fortifications as to obstruct our passage. Moreover, the little space, which hemmed in our colony, and which does not contain even an acre of land, ought to interest your nation less than the buildings which are there and which have been raised up at the expense of Mr. Sichterman (1744 A.D.) as can be seen from the Latin inscription which is about the door."[69] Mr. Huyghens informed Mr. William Barwell[70] of this conduct on the part of the French,[71] whereupon the Council in Calcutta decided to report to the Nawāb their apprehension of an attack from the French,[72] who had violated the neutrality of the Ganges.[73] However, after the suspension of hostilities in Europe, the garden of the Dutch was restored to

67 Consultations, 3rd January, 1749. This garden was "in the centre of Fort Gustavas having three terraces, rising one above the other ornamented with flowers."—Long, Vol. I, p. 15, footnote.

68 Correspondance du Conseil de Chandernagor avec divers, 2e partie, p. 371.

69 *Ibid.*

70 A sketch of his career by Sir William Foster has been published in *Bengal : Past and Present*, January to June, 1924, pp. 35-43.

71 Consultations, 3rd January, 1749.

72 *Ibid.*

73 *Ibid.*

them in the month of April, 1749.[74] The three European Companies did not thereafter quarrel with one another in Bengal till the outbreak of the Seven Years' War in Europe again influenced Indian politics. In 1755 A.D. they laid their heads together on a certain cause. In that year Mir Abu Tālib, *nāib* of Krishnadās, Deputy Governor of Dacca, demanded considerable presents from the Dutch factory at Dacca, and confined a writer of that factory till the local Dutch chief promised to comply with his demand. The English, the French, and the Dutch took it to be an arbitrary insult to the prestige of all of them, and agreed to send a joint appeal to the Nawāb of Bengal.[75]

Peaceful relations among the Europeans in Bengal from the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle till the outbreak of the Seven Years' War.

Alivardi was always particular about exerting his authority over the European traders in Bengal. "He was," writes Jean Law, "zealous of his authority. He especially affected a great independence whenever there was question of any affair between himself and the Europeans. To speak to him of *firmans* or of privileges obtained from the Emperor was only to anger him. He knew well how to say at the proper moment that he was both King and Wazir."[76]. The English and the French tried to please him by occasionally presenting an Arab horse or a beautiful Persian cat.[77] In the year 1748, he, "on some contempt of his authority, attacked and drove the factor of the Ostend Company out of" the Hugli river.[78] In the year 1751, when two Englishmen, Messrs. Acton and Mills, under the protection of the Germans, appeared between Chandernagore and Hugli

Alivardi exerted authority over the Europeans.

74 Letters from the French chief at Chandernagore to Mr. Huyghens, dated the 9th and the 14th of April, 1749. Correspondance du Conseil de Chandernagor avec divers. 2e partie, p. 378.

75 Consultations, 14th July, 1755.

76 Hill, Vol. III, p. 160.

77 Letter to Court, 27th January, 1748; Consultations, 20th December, 1754; Correspondance du Conseil de Chandarnagor avec divers, 2e partie, p. 370.

78 Orme, *Indostan*, pp. 45-46.

with three ships of war hoisting German (Prussian) colours,[79] he wrote to Mr. Dawson, President of the Council in Calcutta, asking him to take precautionary measures and to drive out those German ships of war. Mr. Dawson replied on the 19th August, 1751 :—" I have given orders to the pilots not to take charge of any of the Alleman (German) ships or show them the way on any account, and do not doubt but that the Dutch and the French have done the same. God forbid that they should come this way, but should this be the case, I am in hopes that through your uprightness they will be either sunk, broke, or destroyed."[80]

His officers too occasionally exercised their authority.

The Nawāb's officers too exercised their authority over the European traders, when occassions arose. Thus, towards the end of September, 1746, an agent of Atāullah Khān, *faujdār* of Rājmahal, arrested M. Renault at Sakrigali in obedience to the orders of his master.[81] The European Companies had to offer presents every year to the high officers of the Nawāb. In May, 1748, the President of the Council in Calcutta paid to the *faujdār* of Hugli the ' usual annual present ' amounting to 2,750 rupees. When, towards the end of the year 1754, Rajballabh, *diwān* of Dacca, demanded the usual present from the local European factors, the French and the English compounded it for Rs. 1,300 rather than prejudicing their trade.[82] But just the next year, Rājballabh sent orders to his men at Bākarganj to stop all boats that might pass that way, whereupon the English factors at Dacca decided that all the boats of the Company should proceed by the way of Tantalea.[83] They also sent an express letter to the Council in Calcutta soliciting its protection.[84] The Council deputed

79 Consultations, 19th August, 1751.

80 *Ibid.*

81 Correspondance du Conseil de Chandarnagor avec divers, 2e partie, p. 340.

82 Letter to Court, 1st March, 1755.

83 *Ibid.* The Tētulia estuary is meant.

84 Consultations, 12th February, 1755.

Lieutenant John Harding with 25 *Buxaries* in order "to clear these boats if stopped in their way to Dacca and to take them under his protection." Several boats of the Company, laden with rice, were actually stopped at Dacca, which occasioned a great scarcity and dearness of rice there.[85]

Alivardi's behaviour towards the Europeans was indeed strict, but it was not unnecessarily harsh. Mr. Bisdom, Director of the Dutch Council at Chinsurā, stated in his petition to Sirājuddaulah on the 26th June, 1756, that in the past they had "generally been befriended and countenanced by the Princes of the land and, up to the glorious Nawāb Souja-ul-mulk Mahabat Jung (Alivardi) inclusive, always endowed with privileges."[86] A contemporary French writer also remarked that Alivardi "was very fond of the Europeans and they all feared the moment of his death because of the disturbances which might then take place."[87] About the year 1755 he permitted the Danes to settle at Serampore.[88] He exacted money from the Europeans occasionally under pressing financial needs due to a combination of troubles, external as well as internal, and not on mere "groundless pretences" as the Council at Fort St. George wrongly reported to Admiral Watson in 1756.[89] He had certainly no desire to expel the Europeans from his province, or to injure their trade in any way.

Alivardi's behaviour towards the Europeans strict but not harsh.

Mr. J. Z. Holwell's charge that Alivardi in his death-bed speech[90] instructed Sirājuddaulah, his heir-designate, to

85 *Ibid.* 86 Hill, Vol. I, pp. 29-30. 87 *Ibid*, Vol. III, p. 216.

88 *Ibid*; Bolts, *Considerations*, p. 71. The Danes established a factory at Patna also in 1775.

89 Hill, Vol. I, p. 199.

90 The speech referred to was, according to Holwell, as follows :—" ..... keep in view the power the Europeans have in this country. This fear I would also have freed you from, if God had lengthened my days. The work, my son, must now be yours. Their wars and politicks in the Telinga country (southern India) should keep you waking. On pretence of private contests between these kings they have seized and divided the country of the King

reduce the power of the Europeans, seems to be a concoction. Though a "man of great ability," Holwell was not an impartial historian. He was in the habit of inventing stories or fabricating facts to serve his own ends.[91] Clive condemns him strongly :—" Mr. Holwell is a specious and sensible man, but from what I have heard and observed myself I cannot be persuaded he will ever make use of his abilities for the good of the Company."[92] He apprehended serious consequences if he succeeded him in 1760 : " Mr.....has talents, but I fear wants a heart, therefore, unfit to preside where integrity as well as capacity are equally essential."[93] Further, there are some contemporary records which tend to prove that Holwell concocted Alivardi's death-bed speech to his grandson. Mr. Mathew Collet, second in the English factory at Cāssimbāzār, wrote to the Council in Calcutta on the 22nd January, 1757 :—....." as to Aliverde Cawn's last dying speech********, I look on it as a specious fable."[94] Mr. Richard Becher, chief of the Company's factory at Dacca, remarked in his letter to the Council in Calcutta, dated the 25th January, 1757 :—" Mr. Holwell will excuse me if I do not admit Aliverdee Cawn's (Alivardi Khān's) speech as genuine till better proofs are brought to support it than any I have yet seen. Such advice if really given, it is reasonable to imagine had few or no witnesses, so that it appears very improbable Mr. Holwell in his distressed situation at Muxadavad (Murshidābād) should have been able to unravel the mysteries of the Cabinet and explore a secret never yet known to anyone but

Alivardi's death-bed speech,—a concoction.

(Mughal) and the goods of his people between them. Think not to weaken all three together. The power of the English is great, they have lately conquered Angria (the pirate chief of Gheria) and possessed themselves of his country; reduce them first; the others will give you little trouble, when you have reduced them. Suffer them not, my son, to have fortifications or soldiers; if you do the country is not yours."

91 *Bengal : Past and Present, July-September, 1915.*

92 Hill, Vol II, p. 186.

93 Malcolm, *Life of Clive*, Vol. II, p. 137 and p. 139.

94 Hill, Vol. II, p 129.

himself."[95] Mr. Watts, chief of the English factory at Cāssimbāzār, wrote to the Court of Directors on the 30th January, 1757 :—"The last dying speech of Mahabat Jang or Alivardi Cawn to his grandson neither he (Holwell), nor I believe, any of the Gentleman of the Factory, ever heard of; neither have I since heard from any of the country people; it seems an imitation of the speech of Louis XIV to his grandson, and appears, as Mr. Collet aptly terms it, only a specious fable."[96] Once at the instigation of the Afghān general Mustafā Khān, Alivardi's nephews, Shahāmat Jang and Saulat Jang, suggested to him the expulsion of the English from Bengal. The reply which the old Nawāb gave to them, after the departure of Mustafā Khān from his *darbār*, is significant in this connection :—"My dear children! Mustafā Khān is a soldier of fortune,* * * * * he wishes that I should always have occasion to employ him, and to put it in his power to ask favours for himself and his friends; but in the name of common sense, why should you join issue with him? What wrong have the English done, that I should wish them ill? Look at yonder plains covered with grass; should you set fire to it, there would be no stopping its progress; and who is the man then who shall put out a fire that shall break forth at sea, and from thence come out upon land? Beware of lending an ear to such proposals again. For they will produce nothing but evil."[97] Harcharan Dās wrote in 1784 that, just before his death, Alivardi enjoined upon Sirājuddaulah not to quarrel with the English.[98]

95 *Ibid*, p. 162.
96 *Ibid*, Vol. III, p. 336.
97 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 611.
98 *Chahār Gulzār-i-Shujāi*, Elliot, Vol. VIII, p. 21.

CHAPTER VI

Close of Alivardi's Regime ;

His Character and Administration

The month of June, 1751, saw Alivardi relieved of the Marātha menace. Apprehending no further external danger, he gradually reduced the number of his troops.[1] He had also to effect some changes in the machinery of administration to meet the needs of the time. Rājārām Singh, hitherto head of the espionage department in his government, was now appointed *faujdār* of Midnāpur, his brother Nārāin Singh succeeding him to his previous position.[2] Karam Ali, the author of *Muzaffarnāmah*, received the *faujdāri* of *chucklā* Ghorāghāt in North Bengal.[3] The Nawāb's old *diwān* Biru Dutt died at the time, and Rājah Kyretchānd was appointed in his place with Umid Rāy as his deputy. Kyretchānd was the son of the famous officer *rāyrāyān* Alamchānd. He had already gained some administrative experience during the tenure of his office as *diwān* of Zainuddin at Patna, and after the latter's death, of Atāullah Khān at Rājmahal.[4] He followed Atāullah Khān up to Benāres when the latter was proceeding to Oudh after his expulsion from Bengal by Alivardi, and parted company with him there. He was then summoned by Alivardi to Murshidābād and invested with the office mentioned above. On auditing some important state-papers, he soon discovered a total balance of one crore and several lacs of rupees standing against

Retrenchment in the army and some official changes after 1751.

[1] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 591.

[2] *Ibid*; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 31B. Rajārām Singh held this post till the time of Sirājuddaulah.

[3] Muzaffarnāmah, f. 84A.

[4] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 592.

some persons of high rank like Jagat Seth Mahātābchānd, Tilakchānd, the then Rājah of Burdwān, and a few others.[5] The amount was fully realized, and Kyretchānd remained in full power and influence for two years till death carried him away, when his deputy Umid Rāy was allowed to succeed him with the title of *rāyrāyān*. Rājah Jānkīrām, deputy governor of Bihār, died in the year 1752, when this office was conferred upon his *diwān* Rāmnārāin.[6] Durlabhrām, a son of Rājah Jānkīrām, who had, during his father's life time, served as deputy *diwān* of the military department of the Nawāb's government, was now elevated to the office of the *diwān* of that department, and was also engaged by Rāmnārāin to act as his *vakil* at the Murshidābād court.[7]

Early career of Rāmnārāin.

Rāmnārāin was the son of a *srivāstava Kāyastha*, named Raṅglāl,[8] an inhabitant of village Kishunpur in *paragānā* Sāsārām of the Shahābād district in Bihār.[9] Neither Yusuf Ali nor Ghulām Husain refers to Raṅglāl's association with Alivardi. Karam Ali[10] and Kalyān Singh[11] make mention of one Raṅglāl being employed in the army of Alivardi and fighting against Ghaus Khān in the field of Giriā, but they do not state whether he was the father of Rāmnārāin or not. We know, however, from other sources[12] that Raṅglāl, father of

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Ibid*, p 593; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 83 B. For Alivardi's *parwānāh* appointing Rāmnārāin Deputy Governor of Bihār, *vide* Appendix 'D.'

[7] Siyar, Vol II, p. 593.

[8] *Ibid*

[9] Preface to the *Diwān-i-Mauzoom* of Rājah Rāmnārāin, compiled by Rai Lachman Prasād in 1870 A.D. and published by the Nawole Kishore Press, Lucknow.

[10] Muzaffarnāmah, f. 80A.

[11] Khulāṣat-ut-Tawārikh, f. 29B.

[12] (*a*) Gul-i-Raānā, p. 284 (manuscript No. 701 in the Oriental Public Library, Patna). It is a biography of eminent Persian poets, compiled by Rājah Lachmī Nārāyaṇ of Auraṅgābād in 1182 A.H. (1768 A. D.).

(*b*) Sahifa-i-Khusgo (a biography of poets), by Lālā Brindāban Dās of Mathurā who died at Patna in 1756 A.D.

(*c*) Preface to *Riyāz-ul-Afkār*, by Wazir Ali Ibrati of Patna, completed in 1851 A.D. (manuscript No. 1784 in the Oriental Public Library, Patna.)

Rāmnārāin, was a *diwān* of Alivardi, probably during his incumbency as the Deputy Governor of Bihār. The facts that Rāmnārāin's father served under Alivardi, and he himself enjoyed the patronage of Alivardi's family from his early life, are established by some of his (Rāmnārāin's) letters, wherein he describes himself as 'a hereditary slave (of Alivardi),' 'the child of your slave,' 'one trained by you and the murdered Nawāb (Haibat Jang).[13] Rāmnārāin began his official career as a clerk in Bihār on a salary of rupees five only per mensem.[14] He was subsequently appointed *khāshnabis* or private secretary of Zainuddin, in the beginning of his Deputy Governorship, through the help of Hedāyat Ali, father of the historian Ghulām Husain.[15] In 1745 he fought for Zainuddin against Mustafā Khān.[16] He also gradually acquired proficiency in Persian and Arabic languages, and grew up to be a Persian and Urdu poet, being for some time a pupil of Shaikh Ali Hazin, the famous poet of Ispahan, who then came to Patna.[17] At the same time, he acquired considerable skill and ability in matters of administration as well, so that in the time of Jānkīrām he was raised to the post of his *diwān*.[18] Very cordial relations existed between the Bengali Deputy Governor and his Bihāri *diwān*, who in several letters[19] acknowledges his indebtedness to his master, and helped him substantially in effecting a satisfactory arrangement of the finances of his government.[20] It was thus in the fitness of things that he succeeded his master as the Deputy Governor of Bihār. A sound financier, and an astute politician, Rāmnārāin governed Bihār efficiently being always mindful of the interests of Alivardi. He kept the Nawāb regularly informed of

13 *Dastur*, p. 20A and p. 214A.
14 *Ibid*, f. 209A.
15 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 593.
16 *Vide ante*, p. 180A.
17 Dastur, f, 180A.
18 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 593.
19 Dastur, f. 235B and 272A.
20 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 593.

the minute details of his administration and obeyed his orders implicitly.[21] He arranged for the regular collection of customs,[22] closely watched the movements of the powerful Bihār Zamindārs like Chatradhāri Singh, Udwant Singh Ujjainā, and Pahalwān Singh of Shāhābād, Kāmgār Khān Mayi of Narhaṭ and Samāi, and Sundar Singh of Tikāri, and compelled each one of them to pay arrears of revenue.[23] He was shrewd enough to watch the course of events at the Delhi and Oudh courts through seven or eight *harkarās* (spies).[24]

Such an able Deputy Governor in Bihār was indeed a valuable acquisition to Alivardi. But the Nawāb, then about seventy-six years old, was not destined to carry on his administration peacefully. His last days became unhappy due to some premature bereavements in his family. Ekrāmuddaulah, the younger brother of Sirājuddaulah, brought up with care as an adopted son by Shahāmat Jang, who had no son of his own, died of small-pox in the year 1752 A. D.[25] It proved to be a terrible calamity not only for Shahāmat Jang but also for the entire family of Alivardi.[26] In fact, as Ghulam Husain has significantly remarked, the Nawāb's family henceforth suffered divine retribution for all the indignities inflicted by Hāji Ahmad on some women in the *harem* of the deceased Nawāb Sarfarāz with the connivance of his brother. Shahāmat Jang, overpowered with grief at the death of Ekrāmuddaulah, died from an attack of dropsy on the 17th December, 1755 A.D.[27] His dead body was carried to *Motijhil* or the 'Lake of Pearls,' which he had got excavated and embellished at a distance of one and a half miles to the south-east of the Murshidābād palace, and was buried in the courtyard of

Death of the members of Alivardi's family : Ekrāmuddaulah,

Shahāmat Jang.

21 Dastur, fs. 19B-20A and fs. 180B-182B.
22 *Ibid*, fs. 183B-184A and f. 195B.
23 *Ibid*, fs. 240A-241B and f. 199B.
24 *Ibid*, f. 164A.
25 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 87B ; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 594.
26 *Ibid*.
27 *Ibid*, pp. 596-97.

the mosque, that had been built there under his order, by the side of Ekrāmuddaulah's grave.[28] His death was deeply mourned by many, as he was a man of charitable and generous disposition. Though lacking in private morals, he had a kind heart, always feeling for the poor and the destitute.[29] Ghulām Husain, who has noted several instances of his beneficence, mentions that besides granting regularly stipends to some he used to spend thirty seven thousand rupees a month in charity for old and impotent persons, whether they were related to him or not; and that there was hardly any widow or orphan in the city of Murshidābād, who was not favoured with his bounty in some form or other.[30] To add to Alivardi's grief, Saulat Jang followed his brother to the other world on the 26th February, 175[illegible],[31] and his dead body was buried in the *Jāfari Bāgh*, a pleasant garden in Purneah. Saulat Jang governed Purneah for full seven years (749-56) with so much equity and attention to the welfare of the subjects that all, high and low, remained content with his government.[32] After his death, the administration of Purneah fell into the hands of his son, Shaukat Jang, who was an ambitious and profligate youth.[33]

and Saulat Jang.

These calamities produced a terrible depression in the mind of the old Nawāb and seriously told upon his health. He was attacked with dropsy on the 10th February, 1756 A.D., which he at first tried to cure by abstaining from water and diet.[34] He was later on placed under medical treatment. But the best efforts of the renowned physicians, including *Hakim*

Alivardi attacked with dropsy;

28 *Ibid.*

29 *Ibid* ; Muzaffarnāmah, fs. 99A-99B. Ghulām Hussain's mother, once during her stay at Murshidābād with her family, received much hospitality from Shahāmat Jang.

30 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 597.

31 *Ibid*, p. 605.

32 *Ibid*, p. 602.

33 *Ibid*, pp. 604-07.

34 *Ibid*, p. 608.

(physician) Hāji Khān[35] and Dr. Forth, the surgeon of the Cāssimbāzār factory,[36] failed to give him any relief. Feeling that his days were numbered, he summoned Sirājuddaulah before him and addressed him thus : "My darling! strength of youth has given place to weakness of old age and the inevitable death is near. Through the grace of God, I have carved out a very rich dominion for you. Now my last words to you are that you should strive for the suppression of the enemies (of the province) and elevation of the friends, and that you should devote yourself to securing the well-being of your subjects by removing all evils and disorders. Union brings forth prosperity and disunion begets misery ; your government will be stable if its foundation is laid on the goodwill of the people. Follow my footsteps so that your enemies may do you no harm so long as you live. If you take to ways of malice and hostility, the garden of prosperity will wither away."[37] The Nawāb's disease proved fatal. He passed away from this world at 5 A.M. on the 10th April, 1756 A. D., at the age of 80.[38] His dead body was buried at the foot of his mother's grave at *Khushbāg* on the west bank of the Bhāgirathi opposite *Motijhil*.[39]

his death.

Alivardi's private life was marked by a high standard of morality. His early training in school of adversity gave a puritanic mould to his temperament, and he was, from his very youth, free from the vices of debauchery and intemperance.[40] Mr. Orme has justly remarked that "his private life was very different from the usual manners of a Mahometan prince in Indostan ; for he was always extremely temperate,

Alivardi's private life marked by a high standard of morality;

35 Muzaffarnāmah. f. 101B.

36 C. R., 1892, p. 331.

37 Muzaffarnāmah, f. 101B.

38 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 608; Dastur, fs. 155B-159A; Tārikh-i-Muzāffari, Elliot, Vol. VIII, p. 324; Hill, Vol. I, p. 248.

39 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 608; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 103A.

40 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 608; Riyāz, p. 321.

had no pleasures, kept no seraglio, and always lived the husband of one wife."[41] He had no taste for musical entertainments and dancing-girls, and avoided the company of women other than those of his own family.[42] That he had a high regard for the fair sex is proved by his generous and chivalrous conduct towards the widow and the daughter of Shamshir Khān, even after he had been cruelly wronged by that Afghān general,[43] and also towards the female members of the family of Mir Habib, after whose desertion to the Marātha camp, they were sent away to him from Murshidābād with every care and honour.[44] He had also a religious turn of mind and an implicit faith in God.[45] In critical moments during his campaigns against his enemies, he solemnly invoked divine assistance and thus derived inspiration to fight with reckless valour.[45a]

his regular habits in daily life.

Alivardi had regular habits in his daily life, and he apportioned his time in such a way as to be able to devote proper attention to each duty. He left his bed two hours before day-light, and having finished the usual evacuations and ablutions, performed some worship of supererogation. After offering the morning prayers, he drank coffee in the company of some choice friends. He came to his *darbār* at 7 A.M. to transact the affairs of his government. He then granted interviews to his principal civil and military officers, patiently heard their representations, and gave suitable answers to all of them. After two hours he retired into a closet, which was attended by some of his favourite friends and some relations like Shahāmat Jang, Saulat Jang,

41 Hill, Vol. I, xxx.

42 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 608; Riyāz, p. 321; Sallimullah, f. 104B.

43 *Vide ante*, Chapter IV.

44 Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 566-67.

45 *Ibid*, p. 608.

45a Alivardi made an endowment "for supporting the necessary establishments" in the *dargah* of Makhdum Sharfuddin, situated at the southern extremity of the Bihār town. Buchanan, Patna-Gaya Report, Vol. I, p. 191.

and Sirājuddaulah. He amused himself there for full one hour, listening to verses and stories. He was fond of nice and delicious foods. Sometimes he personally supervised the cooking of victuals, and suggested new methods of cooking to his butler. He never took his dinner except in the company of a large number of guests. After dinner the enjoyed the services of story-tellers and a short nap thereafter, attended by guards. He got up at 1 P.M., and after finishing his noon-day prayers read aloud a chapter of the Korān before offering his evening prayers. A cup of water, cooled with saltpetre or ice,[46] according to the season, satisfied his thirst. A number of pious and learned men were then introduced before him, and he received each of them with due respect. After the departure of these learned men, he again looked into the affairs of the government for full two hours. With the approach of night, he hastened to his nightly prayers, after which his *begam*, Sirājuddaulah's *begam*, and other ladies of his family, came before him. At night, he ate only some fruits and sweetmeats in the company of those women. This repast over, he went to bed, the story-teller lulling him to sleep, and the guards remaining on the alert all the night.[47]

Alivardi entertained kindly feelings for his relatives, officers, and ordinary servants, and often rewarded them bountifully.[48]

Alivardi's kindness for relatives, officers and others.

He had a soft corner in his heart for the widows, children, and other relatives of his old friends at Delhi, who had helped him much in his early days of distress, and extended his favours to them in the shape of money or employments.[49]

46 Ice was manufactured in large quantity at Rājmahal. Siyar (English translation), Vol. II, p. 158 footnote. The use of saltpetre in cooling water seems to have been a common practice among the rich people of Bengal at least since the 17th century, if not earlier.

47 Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 608-10.

48 Yusuf, f. 17; Siyar, Vol. II, p. 610; Muzaffarnāmah, f. 103B.

49 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 610.

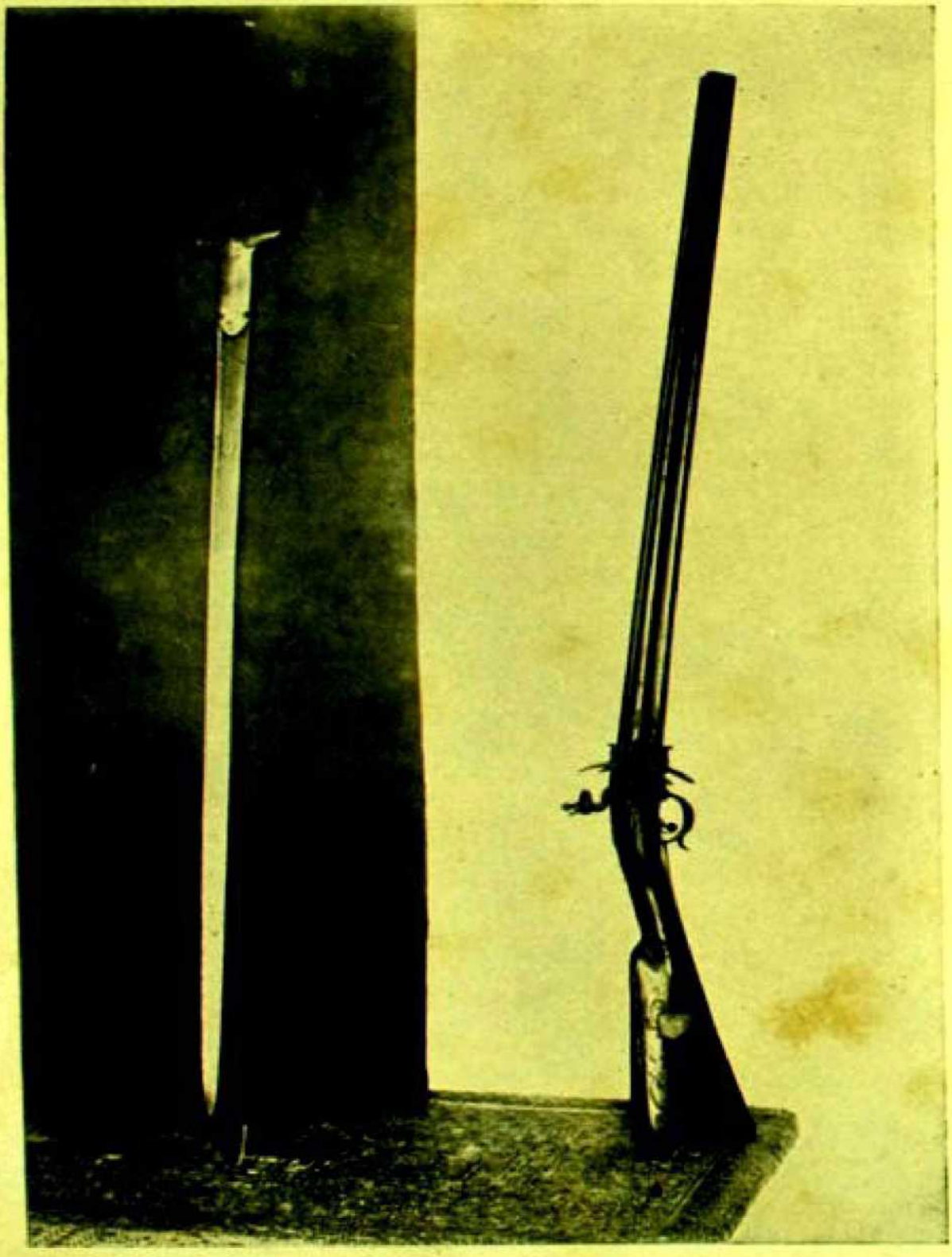
Defects in Alivardi's character.

But his character was not perfect in all respects. He was, as M. Jean Law rightly observed, "deceitful and ambitious in the highest degree."[50] The treacherous assassination of Abdul Karim Khān Ruhelā under his orders as the Deputy Governor of Bihār,[51] his most ungrateful conduct towards Sarfarāz,[52] and the manner in which he brought about the massacre of Bhāskar and his followers at Mankarah,[53] are acts too odious to be defended. His career also illustrates the weakness of personal government Like King David and Edward III he fell into dotage during the closing years of his life, and selected his spoilt grandson Sirāj-uddaulah as his successor. "On a small scale," remarks Mr. H. Beveridge, "the mistake was of as evil consequence as that committed by Marcus Aurelius when he left the Roman world to the mercy of Commodus. And it was perhaps less excusable, for Alivardi Khān knew his grandson's viciousness,[54] while perhaps Marcus Aurelius did not know Commodus' faults.[55]

Alivardi's fondness for animals,—for witnessing animal-fights, and hunting wild animals.

Alivardi had a great fondness for keeping fine animals like horses, dogs, cats, etc., for witnessing animal-fights, and hunting wild animals. A letter from the French Council at Chandernagore to M. Le Vernier, the French chief at Surat, dated the 11th January, 1746, stated: "The Nawāb has been requesting us for a long time to have Persian cats. Can you not send two of them on Armenian vessels,[56] which will start from your place in May for its destination in the Ganges? He has demanded white and male cats."[57] In 1749 the English in

50 Hill, Vol. III. p. 160.
51 *Vide ante*, Chapter I.
52 *Vide ante*, Chapter II.
53 *Vide ante*, Chapter III.
54 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 611.
55 C. R., 1893, p. 241.
56 Another reference to Armenian trading vessels in Bengal.
57 Correspondance du Conseil de Chandernagor avec divers, 2e partie, p. 370.



THE GUN AND THE SWORD USED BY ALIVARDI

(These are still preserved in the palace of the Nawāb Bāhādur of Murshidābād. It is interesting to note that the gun was manufactured at Monghyr and the sword at Gujarāṭ)

Calcutta tried to please him by presenting a fine Arab horse,[58] and in 1754 also they sent him one Persian cat to prevent his *darbar* "from making any frivolous pretence for a stoppage" of the Company's business.[59] For his hunting excursions, the Nawāb went during winter to the hills and forests of Rājmahal, then abounding with tigers and deer.[60] He spent his mornings there in chasing wild animals, and in the afternoons, he amused himself with witnessing fights of animals like elephants and the Deccan cocks.[61] His nephew Saulat Jang often came from Purneah to join him in these excursions and occasionally accompanied him to Murshidābād.[62]

Bravery in the field.

The Nawāb was a prudent, keen, and valorous warrior.[63] He knew, as M. Jean Law writes, "how to command an army."[64] Ghulām Husain remarks that "in generalship he had no equal in his age except Asaf Jāh Nizām-ul-mulk."[65] His campaigns against the Marāthas[66] and the Afghān rebels[67] bear an eloquent testimony to his remarkable bravery, tact, and farsightedness in battlefields.

His patronage of arts and letters.

Though devoid of any taste for music and dancing, Alivardi took delight in other pleasures and pastimes. He could appreciate and evaluate a number of arts, crafts, and physical feats, and showed due regards to all who were proficient in these.[68] He often studied, during his leisure hours, books on theology and history,[69]

58 Letter to Court, 27th January, 1749.
59 Consultations, 20th December, 1754.
60 Siyar, Vol. II, p 593.
61 *Ibid.*
62 *Ibid.*
63 *Ibid*, p. 610.
64 Hill, Vol. III, p. 160.
65 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 565.
66 *Vide ante*, Chapter III.
67 *Vide ante*, Chapter IV.
68 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 610.
69 *Ibid*, p. 608.

and was a patron of learned men.[70] A batch of eminent scholars, such as Maulavī Nāsir Ali Khān, his son Dāud Ali Khān, Zāir Husain Khān, Mir Muhammad Aleem, Maulavī Muhammad Ārif, Mir Rustum Ali, Shāh Muhammad Amin, Shāh Adham, Hyāt Beg, Shāh Khizr, Sayyid Mir Muhammad Sajjād, Sayyid Alimullah, grandfather of Ghulām Husain, the author of Siyar, Shāh Haidari, a maternal uncle of Ghulām Husain's paternal grandfather, and Qazi Ghulām Muzāffar, whom Alivardi elevated to the office of the supreme judge of Murshidābād, flourished in his court.[71]

Nature of Alivardi's administration.

Both Ghulām Husain and Karam Ali have described Alivardi's administration in eulogistic terms. Ghulām Husain has gone so far as to assert that it was marked by an all round lenity and that the Nawāb was so careful to promote the comfort and welfare of his subjects, especially of the husbandmen, that they felt as secure as under their fathers' knees or in their mothers' arms.[72] Making due allowance for exaggeration in the accounts of these writers, who were in several ways indebted to Alivardi, a sober student of history cannot but admit that he was, after all, a tactful and strong governor, who tried to infuse spirit and vigour into every branch of his administration and to secure the interests of the governed.

Alivardi's policy and measures after 1751.

The first eleven years of Alivardi's administration formed a period of storm and stress, during which he remained preoccupied with thoughts of repelling his enemies, and could do nothing substantial to serve the material interests of Bengal. But after his treaty with the Marāthas in May or June, 1751, he did not fail to realise that measures of reconstruction were needed to heal quickly the wounds inflicted by the ravages of the long-continued warfare. He then applied himself " with judgment and alacrity

[70] *Ibid*, pp. 611-14.
[71] *Ibid*.
[72] *Ibid*, p 610

to the repose and security of his subjects, and never afterwards deviated in the smallest degree from those principles."[73] He turned his attention towards rebuilding and restoring many towns and villages, which had been desolated by the Marāthas, or had been abandoned before their advance by the inhabitants, and encouraged the agriculturists to cultivate their lands again.[74] Thus, like a wise and beneficent ruler, Alivardi tried to secure the uplift of the villages, and the improvement of agriculture, which have ever formed the backbone of prosperity in a country like India, and which must occupy the foremost place in a programme of administrative reforms in this country.

The mode of collecting revenues by the Nawāb's government was not arbitrary at all. In conformity with the usual custom of the time, the Nawāb settled the *mālguzāri* (revenue assessments) with the zamindārs of his province "on moderate terms."[75] These zamindārs, having a natural interest in their districts, afforded proper encouragement to *ryots* (peasant cultivators), never rack-rented them, but, if necessary, waited for their rent till they could conveniently pay it, and even borrowed money at times on their own account to pay their *mālguzāri* punctually to the Nawāb's government.[76] There were *shroffs* (money-lenders, bankers) in all districts "ready to lend money to Zamindārs when required, and even to the *ryots*, which enabled many to cultivate their grounds, which otherwise they could not have done."[77] Thus agriculture did not suffer for want of money, but

[73] C. P. C., Vol. II, p. 191 and p. 197.

[74] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 591. It would have been interesting to know if he had settled any portion of the numerous disbanded soldiers (since 1751) in any of these restorted or new settlements. But we have no information on the point. If he had not, it was a great mistake.

[75] Minute of Mr. Shore, dated the 18th June, 1789, in Firminger, *Fifth Report*, Vol. II, p. 17; Letter of Richard Becher to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, dated 24th May, 1769, quoted in Ramsay Muir, *Making of British India*, pp. 92-95. Richard Becher had an experience of Bengal affairs for several years.

[76] *Ibid.*

[77] *Ibid.*

it was then obstructed by the ravages of the Marāthas and the Mugs. In that respect it has to be admitted that absence of full security of life and property affected the agriculture of Bengal adversely in this time, as it did the industries also.[77a]

His financial measures.

The Nawāb never realised money forcibly from the masses ; but in times of financial emergencies, during the first eleven years of his government, when the revenue-collections fell far short of the standard assessments, he had to take ' casual aids ' from the European traders,[78] and the principal zamindārs of his province, like Rājah Rāmakānta of Rājsāhī, Rājah Rāmanātha of Dinājpur, and Mahārājah Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā, whose jurisdictions being situated mostly to the east of the Ganges were free from Marātha ravages.[79] After 1751 A.D., however, he, in imitation of Murshid Quli Jāfar Khān and Shujāuddin, levied *abwābs*, that is, additional impositions, besides the standard assessments, on the zamindārs.[80] The total amount of the *abwābs*, levied during his administration, was Rs. 22,25,554.[81] It has been held by Mr. Shore that this additional exaction did not prove burdensome on the people, as " the resources of the country were, at that period, adequate to the measure of exactions."[82] But it should be remembered that this amount seemed moderate in comparison with the demand of the Permanent Settlement, which was beyond the paying capacity of the land in Bengal and Bihār in those days. Besides, as it has been already noted, though agriculture was encouraged, its economic condition was far from satifactory owing to a number of causes. In any case, the principle underlying it was pernicious, and its extension in future adversely affected the interests of

77a *Vide infra*, p. 217.

78 *Vide ante*, Chapter V.

79 Grant, *A Historical and Comparative Analysis of the finances of Bengal*, in Firminger, *Fifth Report*, Vol. II, p. 217.

80 *Ibid*, pp. 217-22.

81 These impositions were of three kinds :—(*a*) *Chauth Marātha*, Rs. 15,31,817 ; (*b*) Abuk and Kist Gour, Rs. 81,93,140 ; (*c*) Nazarānā Mansurganj, Rs 5,01,597. *Ibid*.

82 *Ibid*, p. 11.

the country. Mr. Shore himself rightly observed on the 18th June, 1789, that "the mode of imposition was fundamentally ruinous, both to the *ryots* and zamindārs; and the direct tendency of it was, to force the latter into extortions, and all into fraud, concealment, and distress."[83]

Services of Alivardi's Hindu officers.

The zealous services of a batch of able Hindu officers contributed largely to the success of Alivardi's government.[84] The most prominent among these officers were Jānkirām, Durlabhrām, Darpanārāin, Rāmnārāin, Kyretchānd, Umid Rāy, Biru Dutt, Rāmrām Singh, and Gokulchānd. Mr. Orme rightly points out the influence of Alivardi's Hindu officers in his civil administration, but he is wrong in asserting that they played no important part in military affairs.[85] We know from Ghulām Husain that the Nawāb invested some of them with the dignity of 7,000 *mansab*, and that there were several Hindus highly placed in the military service of his government.[86] Fateh Rāo, Chedan Hāzārī, and a few other Hindu generals, with 50,000 musketeers, helped Alivardi in his Orissā expedition;[87] and Jaswantnāgar, Kyretchānd, Rāmnārāin, and some other Hindu commanders, ably supported his cause against Mustafā Khān.[88]

Hindu support—a predominant factor in the career of Alivardi.

Hindu support was, indeed, a predominant factor in the career of Alivardi. Alamchānd and Fatechānd Jagat Seth were active participators in the conspiracy of 1739-40, which resulted in his usurpation of the Bengal Government. The Seths of Murshidābād, and the leading Hindu merchants of Bengal like Omichānd and others, remained all along attached to him. It was really a sound and prudent policy on his part to enlist the sympathy and

[83] *Ibid.*
[84] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 833.
[85] Indostan, Vol. II, p. 53.
[86] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 833.
[87] *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 503.
[88] *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 535.

support of the Hindus of Bengal, and to appoint some of them to high offices in his state, for the security of his position against his enemies like the discontended partisans of the slain Nawāb Sarfarāz, the disaffected Afghān soldiers, and the Marātha invaders.

Undercurrent of Hindu discontent.

It should be, however, noted that in spite of Alivardi's attempts at conciliation there remained an undercurrent of discontent among some Hindu zamindārs, who probably felt his impositions to be heavy and unjust. This discontent was clearly reflected in the work of a contemporary Hindu writer, Bhāratacandra, who was a court-poet of one of the zamindārs, Mahārājah Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā. A foreign observer, Colonel Scot (chief engineer of the Company), also wrote to his friend Mr. Noble in 1754 that "the Jentue (Hindu) rājahs and inhabitants were very much disaffected to the Moor (Muhammadan) government and secretly wished for a change and opportunity of throwing off their yoke."[89] As long as the strong hands of Alivardi held the reins of power, this smouldering discontent could not be expressed by them in any overt political action. But it was fanned into flames by the folly and capriciousness of his weak successor Sirājuddaulah, and soon became wide-spread. Not only the disaffected zamindārs, but also some staunch adherents of Alivardi, formed the 'great conspiracy' of 1757 against his grandson.[90]

Subsequent attitude of the Hindu element to the Nawābship.

The Hindu aristocrats and officers of Bengal henceforth extended their support and sympathy to the English East India Company, and their attitude to the Nawābship continued to be hostile.[91]

[89] Hill's *Bengal*, Vol. III, p. 328.

[90] Kṛṣṇacandracarita, by Rājiblocana, p. 98. The aged Darpanārāin (Sen) is said to have warned Sirāj about the conspiracy, but was scoffed at by his over-confident master, whereupon he retired in disgust to Benāres.

[91] For further details on this point, *vide* my *Bengal Subah*, Vol I, pp. 102-06.

CHAPTER VII

Commerce of Bengal

A. Asiatic Trade

The various natural advantages of Bengal enabled her to develop wide-spread commercial relations from early times; and in this (18th) century also, her trade brought within its net not only the different countries of Asia but also of Europe and Africa. Her fertile plains, genial climate, and the industry of her inhabitants, conduced to the production of prodigious quantities of commercial goods, and her mighty rivers, with their numerous branches, and the large number of canals and creeks running through almost very part of the province, provided a cheap transport for her merchandise, from one corner of it to another. "The easy communication by water from place to place, facilitated," remarks Mr. Dow, "a mercantile intercourse among the inhabitants. Every village has its canal, every Perganah (*paraganā*), its river, and the whole kingdom the Ganges, which falling by various mouths, into the Bay of Bengal lay open the ocean for the export of commodities and manufactures."[1] Rennell, who made himself intimately acquainted with the geography of Bengal in course of his survey, also observes:—"The Ganges and Burrampooter (Brahmaputra) Rivers, together with their numerous branches and adjuncts, intersect the country of Bengal in such a variety of directions as to form the most complete and easy inland navigation that can be conceived. So equally and admirably diffused are those natural canals, over a country that approaches nearly to a perfect plane, that, after excepting the

Bengal remarkable for her commerce.

Facility of water transport.

[1] Dow, Vol. I, cii.

lands contiguous to Burdwan, Birbhoom, etc., which may be reckoned a sixth part of Bengal, we may safely pronounce, that every other part of the country, has, even in the dry season, some navigable stream within 25 miles at furthest, and more commonly within a third part of that distance. It is supposed, that this inland navigation gives constant employment to 30,000 boatmen. Nor will it be wondered at, when it is known, that all the salt, and a large proportion of the food consumed by ten millions of people are conveyed by water within the kingdom of Bengal and its dependencies. To these must be added, the transport of commercial exports and imports, probably to the amount of two millions sterling per annum; the interchange of manufactures and products throughout the whole country; fisheries, and articles of travelling."[2]

Balance of trade in favour of Bengal in the pre-Plassey period.

In the pre-Plassey period, "the balance of trade was against all nations in favour of Bengal; and it was the sink where gold and silver disappeared without the least prospect of return."[3] The "immense commerce of Bengal," during the first half of the 18th century, "might be considered," wrote the Select Committee in Bengal to the Court of Directors, on the 26th September, 1767, "as the central point to which all the riches of India were attracted.....specie flowed in by thousand channels..... .....All the European Companies formed their investments with money brought into the country; the Gulphs (of Mocha and Persia) poured in their treasures into this river (the Ganges)."[4] Thus the province derived considerable benefit from her extensive and vigorous foreign trade.

Almost every year, numbers of Persians, Abyssinians, Arabs, Chinese, Turks, Moors, Jews, Georgians, Armenians, and merchants from some other parts of Asia, poured into Bengal,[5] and purchased ship-loads of her manufactured goods, and agri-

[2] Rennell, *Memoir of the Map of Indostan*, p. 245.
[3] Dow, Vol. I, ciii.
[4] Verelst, Appendix, p. 59.
[5] Grose, Vol. II, p. 234.

cultural products like foodstuff and spices. She had a flourishing trade also with the Laccadive and the Maldive islands and almost all the eastern countries of Asia,—China, Pegu, the Malayan and the Philippine islands.[6] Mr. Bartholomew Plaisted wrote in 1750 that the European factories at Balasore "drove a pretty good Trade to the Maldive islands with Rice and other Grains."[7] At least down to the year 1756, "the coasts of Coromandel and Malabar, the gulf of Persia and the Red sea, nay even Manilla, China, and the *coast of Africa* were obliged to Bengal for taking off their cotton,[8] pepper, drugs, fruits, chank, cowries, tin, etc., as on the other hand they were supplied from Bengal with what they could not well be without, such as raw silk and its various manufactures, opium, vast quantities of cotton cloth, rice, ginger, turmeric, long pepper, etc., and all sorts of gruff goods."[9] Sugar[10] and wheat[11] were also two important exports of Bengal to these Asiatic countries. Immediately before 1756 "the annual exportation of sugar was about 50,000 maunds, which yielded a profit of about 50 per cent. and the returns for which were generally in specie."[11a] The Dutch traveller Stavorinus, who visited Bengal during 1769-71, states that, besides rice, Bengal produced "also very good wheat which was formerly used to be sent to Batavia."[12]

Considerable exports of Bengal to the Asiatic countries and the coast of Africa.

6 Dow, Vol. I, cii ; Hill, Vol. III, p. 216.

7 Bartholomew Plaisted, A journal, etc. (1750 A D.).

8 It is important to note that Bengal had to import cotton from outside. Thus the native production of cotton, which was also not insignificant (*vide* Rennell's Journals), was not sufficient for her extensive manufactures (for a further discussion on this point, *vide* p. 281).

9 Causes of the loss of Calcutta, by David Rannie; Hill, Vol. III, p. 390; Orme, *Indostan*, Vol. II, p. 4 ; Grose, Vol. II, p. 295.

10 Orme, *Indostan*, Vol II, p 4. This trade in sugar declined later on due to competition of Java sugar in the markets of Western India. Stavorinus, Vol. I, p. 232 and Vol. III, p. 327.

11 Stavorinus, Vol. I, p. 391.

11a Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, Vol. II, p. 270.

12 Stavorinus, Vol. I, p. 391. This export of wheat was later on discouraged; writes Stavorinus, "in order to favour as much as possible, the corn trade of the Cape of Good Hope."

Political disorders in the different Asiatic states,[13] and also in Bengal, gradually caused the decline of this vigorous commerce of Bengal with Western and Eastern Asia, and Africa. The once flourishing empire of Persia was torn asunder by the anarchy and 'unremitting civil wars,' which followed the assassination of Nādir Shāh in 1747 A.D. Georgia and Armenia, which "shared in the troubles of Persia, shared also her untoward fate. Indigence ... shut up the doors of commerce; vanity ..... disappeared with wealth," and the people had to content themselves with "the coarse manufactures of their native countries."[14] The Turkish empire "declined on its southern and eastern frontiers. Egypt rebelled; Babylonia, under its Basha, revolted. The distracted state of the former... almost shut up the trade by caravans, from Suez to Cairo; from the latter of which, the manufactures of Bengal were conveyed by sea to all the ports of the Ottoman dominions. The rapacity of the Basha of Bagdad,.....increased by the necessity of keeping a great standing force to support his usurpation,..... environed with terror the walls of Bussorah, which circumstance ..... almost annihilated its commerce with Syria ....."[15]

Decline of this trade due to political disorders in the Asiatic countries and in Bengal.

(a) Disorders in the Asiatic countries.

The political revolutions in Bengal since the battle of Plassey, and the resultant influence of the English East India Company and its agents and *gomastās*, greatly affected the Asiatic trade of the indigenous merchants of Bengal. "The commerce of Bengal with the different countries of the East .....which was," as Mr. Verelst remarks, "greatly affected by the troubles in Persia and in the countries bordering on the Red Sea, was now (after 1757) ruined by the over-grown influence of the European Companies, who engrossed all the manufactures of Bengal. Such was

(b) Political changes in Bengal.

[13] Verelst, p. 85.
[14] Dow, I, cxiv-cxv.
[15] *Ibid.*

the rigour exercised to complete the quantity (of piecegoods) required by the English directors, that the Nabob* * * * found it difficult to procure the necessary supply for his household, without making application to the English agents.''[16] Bengal thus ceased to obtain a considerable return in bullion for her trade with the eastern countries, and this was one of the factors which caused the scarcity of silver in the province in the post-Plassey period.[17]

The E. I. Co. established its exclusive right of exporting piece-goods to the Asiatic countries.

In course of a few years after Plassey, the English East India Company established its exclusive right of exporting Bengal piecegoods to the markets of Bussorah, Jidda, and Mocha. For the disposal of the goods of this joint concern, the Governor and Council in Calcutta fitted out ships, generally known by the name of 'freight ships,' on which the goods were first shipped, and the remainder of the tonnage was filled up on freight. All these affairs were managed by a member of the Council in Calcutta, who was an 'acting owner' and kept a warehouse for this purpose, generally known in Calcutta by the name of 'freight warehouse.'[18] This practice on the part of the Company exercised a pernicious influence on the course of trade. "Frequent instances have been known," writes Mr. Bolts, "of the goods of private merchants, even Europeans but particularly of those belonging to Armenians, Moguls, Gentoos (Hindus), being in consequence of this monopoly, stopped on the public road, and by force carried to the freight warehouse and the proprietors of such goods have been obliged contrary to their wills to see their goods shipped on vessels they have not a good opinion of, and going on voyages whose destination and management were often contrary to their own private scheme of trade; in consequence of which unwarrantable proceedings, those merchants have frequently lost their sales, have

Evils of this practice.

[16] Verelst, pp. 85-86.
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] Bolts, pp. 195-97.

had their goods damaged * * * * * * and have sometimes lost even the goods themselves." [19]

B. *Inter-Provincial Trade*

Bengal's active commercial relations with the other provinces in the pre-Plassey period.

In economic, administrative, and other matters, the provinces of India have ever been inter-dependent in spite of some natural and artificial barriers. In the field of commerce, Bengal had active relations with the other Indian provinces during the period under review.[20] A variety of merchants, "such as Kāshmerians (of Kāshmīr), Multānis (Multānī = people of Multān), Pātāns (Pāthāns), Sheikhs,[21] Suniassys,[22] Poggyahs (up-country merchants with turbans on their heads), Betteeas (Bhuṭiās) and many others used to resort to Bengal annually in *cafelahs*, or large parties of many thousands, together with troops of oxen, for the transport of goods from different parts of Hindustan, * * * * *"[23] Referring to Burdwān, Holwell wrote in 1765 that "in tranquil times this place afforded an annual large vend for the valuable staples of lead, copper, broadcloth, tin, pepper, *tootanague*. The Puggiah merchants from Delly (Delhi) and Agra, resorted yearly to this great mart, and would (come) again if peace was established in the country :— they purchased the above staples, either with money, or in barter for opium, tincal, saltpetre, and horses."[24] The merchants of Kāshmīr were long accustomed to advance money to the *molunghes*[25] at Sunderbans "to work the salt-pans there."[26] The

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] Verelst. Appendix, p. 59.

[21] Perhaps these refer to the Moslems of Arabia settled in India. Gradually the use of the term became more and more general, and it came to be used also for Moslems coming to India from other countries besides Arabia.

[22] Those refer to the Sannyāsī (mendicant) traders, coming down in batches from the Himālayān region, with finer forest products, such as pieces of sandal and aloe wood, *rudrākṣa beads*, etc.

[23] Bolts, p. 200.

[24] Holwell, I.H.E., p. 196.

[25] *Malāṅgī* = a labourer engaged in manufacturing salt.

[26] Original Papers, Vol. I, pp. 229-31 ; Vansittart, Vol. II, p. 167.

Kāshmīrī and Armenian merchants carried on a trade between Bengal and Nepāl in various articles, and even went farther up to Tibet.[27] The Kāshmīrī merchants trading in Tibet had their agents in Bengal. The principal exports of Bengal to Tibet were broad-cloth, *atter* (otto), skins, *neel* (indigo), pearls, coral, amber, tobacco, sugar, Māldah striped *sāṭins*, and a few species of white cloths, and her imports from Tibet were gold-dust, musk, and cow-tails.[28]

Similarly, merchants from Bengal visited the different parts of upper Hindusthān (Northern India), Assam, Cāchār, Malābār and the Coromandel coasts,[29] and Gujarāṭ. This has found expression in Jayanārāyaṇa's *Harilīlā*, a Bengali book written in 1772 A.D., in the following manner :—"Being a Vaiśya, he maintains his family by carrying on a trade throughout the different parts of the world, such as Hastinā (Delhi), Karṇāṭa (Arcoṭ), Vaṅga (Bengal), Kaliṅga, Gurjara (Gujarāṭ), Bārānasī (Benares), Mahārāṣṭra, Kāshmīr, Pañcāla (Rohilkhand), Kamboja (Tibet), Bhoja (Shāhābād), Magadha, Jayantī (?), Drāviḍa (Southern India), Nepāla, Kāñcī (Conjeeveram), Ajodhyā (Oudh), Avantī (Mālwa), Mathurā, Kāmpilya (Farrukhābād District), Māyāpurī (Haridwār), Dvārāvatī (Dvārakā, Kathiāwāḍ), Chīna (China), Mahāchīna (Mongolia), Kāmrupa (Assam)." There is also a passage in another mid-eighteenth century Bengali work, entitled *'Candrakānta,'* which tells us that merchants from Birbhum and Mallabhum (Bñākurā) carried on trade with Gujarāṭ.[30]

References in contemporary literature.

[27] Khulāṣat-ut-Tawārikh, f. 106. It is stated in this work that Gurgin Khān, the Commander of Mir Kāsim, persuaded his master to send an expedition to Nepāl on hearing of the riches of that country from the Kāshmīrī and Armenian merchants who traded there.

[28] *Memorandum by Mr. Bogle on the Trade of Tibet*, Indian Historical Quarterly, June, 1933.

[29] Dow, Vol. I, ciii.

[30] "My name is Candrakānta Rāya. I am a Gandhavaṇika by caste and an inhabitant of Mallabhum. Leaving my country I have come here with seven boats, filled with articles of trade. I want to exchange my own commodities (with those of this place), and I can stay here if you can provide me with these." Typical Selections, Part II, pp. 1408-12.

The manufactures of Bengal were carried into the remotest parts of India,[31] and "the low price at which salt could be conveyed through all the branches of the Ganges, rendered it an advantageous article of trade in the inland parts of Hindusthan. Great quantities were sent to Benares and Mirzapur from the markets of which, the provinces of Oudh and Allahabad, the territories of the Raja of Bundela and of all the petty princes of the Kingdom of Malwa, were supplied."[32] Vessels laden with betel-nut, tobacco, salt,[33] and cotton piecegoods went to Assām through the Brahmaputra and the Meghnā, and they brought in exchange silk, lac, *mugā dhuties* (silk cloths), ivory, and timber.[34] The traders of Bengal brought aloe wood and elephant's tusks from Cāchār[35] and fir timber from Nepal.[36] Merchants sent iron, stoneware, rice, and other goods from Balasore to Calcutta, and they brought tobacco and other things from Calcutta to Balasore.[37] Holwell has mentioned Balasore stone dishes and cups in the list of articles on which duties were levied in the Calcutta markets.[38]

Bengal articles carried into the remotest parts of India.

But two causes mainly contributed to bring about a decrease of this inter-provincial trade of Bengal since the middle of the 18th century. One of these lay in the gradual overshadowing of the Imperial authority at Delhi by the rise of independent provincial governors, who framed distinct transit and customs laws in their respective dominions, to the great disadvantage of the traders. So long as the Mughal Empire was an organised and united whole, the merchants from one part of it could travel with comparative

Causes of the decline of inter-provincial trade.

(a) Independent provincial governors framing distinct laws.

31 Verelst, *Appendix*, p. 59.
32 Dow, Vol. I, pp. cxix-cxx.
33 Vansittart, Vol. I, pp. 164-68.
34 *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 221; Dow, Vol. I, p. cxv.
35 Proceedings, 17th June, 1763.
36 Proceedings, 1st November, 1762.
37 Letter from Natful Nebeman, Thanadar of Balasore, January, 1751. *Vide* Long, p. 250.
38 Indian Tracts.

safety to another, and were not severely pressed with heavy exactions[39] at *chowkies* (customs-stations), while passing through the different provinces ; but the number of independent kingdoms, which arose on the ruins of the Mughal Empire, almost destroyed the commerce of Bengal with the upper parts of Hindusthān, as every independent ruler levied heavy duties upon all goods that passed through his dominions. The other cause was the growing insecurity of traffic in the country due to political disorders. Thus Mr. Dow observed in 1768 A.D. :—" The merchants who formerly came down towards the mouths of the Ganges to purchase commodities have discontinued a trade, not only ruined by imposts, but even unsafe from banditti. The provinces of Oudh and Assam are the only inland countries with which Bengal drives, at present, any trade."[40]

(b) Insecurity of traffic in the period.

C. *English Factories and Investments*

European commerce in Bengal formed a dominant factor in her economic history during the period under review. Abounding with varieties of commercial goods, she was " most beneficial " to the English traders for investments, in spite of occasional interruptions from the Nawābs.[41] A contemporary French writer also considered Bengal to be " the part of India most necessary to the (French) Company."[42] The Dutch too " traded here for a century and a half (before 1756) * * * brought over countless treasures and transported most vast quantities of commodities."[43]

European trade—a dominant factor in the economic history of Bengal.

39 Consultations, February 5, 1753 A.D. ; Consultations, May 30, 1751 A.D.

40 Dow, *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. cxv.

41 Hill, Vol. I, p. 199.

42 *Ibid*, Vol. III, p. 216.

43 *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. 20.

Distribution of Factories.

To procure goods from Bengal, the European Companies established factories, on different dates, in almost all the important commercial and manufacturing centres.[44] The French had factories at Chandernagore, Cāssimbāzār, Saydābād (near Cāssimbāzār), Patna, Balasore, Rungpur, Dacca, Jugdeā, and 'houses of trade and other agencies' at Supur (in the Birbhum district), Khirpāi,[45] Canicolā, Mohunpur (in the Midnāpur district), Serāmpore, Chittagong, Māldah, and other places, which were regarded as 'subordinates to the said original factories.'[46] Even some interior villages were seats of factories. We know from Gaṅgārāma, a contemporary Bengali writer, that the Dutch had factories in such interior villages as Kāgrāma (in the Murshidābād district) and Mowgrāma (in the Burdwān district).[47] The English Company also had subordinate factories and *aurungs*[48] in interior places like Elāmbāzār[49] near Suri, and Surul[50] near Bolpur, and Ganuṭiā near Sinthiā, in the Birbhum district. The more important English factories were set up in the following places :—Patna, Cāssimbāzār, Rungpur, Rāmpur-Bauliah, Kumārkhālī,[51] Śāntīpur, Burran,[52] Sonāmukhī,[53] Rādhānagore,[54] Khirpāi,[55] Haripāl,[56] Golāgore, Jaṅgīpur,[57] Sārdah,[58]

44 *Ibid*, Vol. III, p. 216.

45 Seven miles east of Candraconā in the Midnāpur district.

46 *Rungpur District Records*, Vol. V, p. 120.

47 Mahārāṣṭrapuraṇā, line 84.

48 A place where any article of trade was manufactured and collected for wholesale disposal and export.

49 Holwell, I.H.E., p. 202. This *aurung* was set up in 1754 A.D. Letter to Court, 9th September, 1754, para. 27.

50 *Bengal : Past and Present*, Vol. XXV, p. 85.

51 Near Kuṣṭhiā in the Nadiā district.

52 In the Nadiā district.

53 In the Bāṅkurā district.

54 In the Midnāpur district.

55 In the Midnāpur district.

56 In the Hugli district, twenty-three miles west of Calcutta.

57 In the Murshidābād district on the Bhāgīrathī,—now headquarters of the subdivision of the same name.

58 In the Rājshāhī district, the old residency building here being occupied by the Police Training School.

Jugdeā, Dacca, Lakṣīpur,[59] Colindā,[60] Balasore, Balarāmgarhy, Māldah, Barānagore, Dhaniākhāli,[61] Buddal,[62] and Hariāl.[63]

Patna was " a place of very considerable trade "[64] in saltpetre,[65] cotton and silk cloths,[66] opium,[67] and other merchandises.[68] From Cāssimbāzār the Company was supplied with raw silk, silk piecegoods, and cotton cloths like *doosooties* (*dusuti* a variety of coarse cotton cloth) and *gurrahs* (a variety of coarse cotton cloth).[69] Dacca was an important centre of the Company's trade for her fine *muslins*. The Jugdeā, Collindā, and Lakṣīpur factories collected various types of cloths like brown or white *baftās* (a variety of calico),[70] *gurrahs*,[71] *dimities*,[72] etc. At Kumārkhālī and Sāntipur the Company got fine *muslins* described in English records as *malmals* and *cossaes* (khāsā, fine muslin).[73] Māldah[74] and Rāmpur-Bauliah[75] also supplied the Company with fine *muslins*. The factories at Balassore and Balarāmgarhy purchased for the Company

59 Sixty miles S. E. of the Dacca city.

60 Rennell's Journals, p. 75. Colindā is situated 23 miles S.E. of the Dacca city.

61 About 20 miles W.N.W. of Hugli.

62 In the Dināipur district.

63 In the Rājshāhī district. The number of English factories grew after Plassey. Mir Kāsim complained in May, 1762 A.D., that nearly four or five hundred new factories had been established in Bengal, Bihār and Orissā (Vansittart, Vol. II, pp. 97-102). In the early 19th century (1810-1811 A.D.) Buchanan saw cloth-factories of the English Company at Jāhānābād (in the Gayā district) and Magurā (in the Bihār sub-division). These factories were dependent on the Company's factory at Patna. Buchanan, *Patna-Gaya Report*, Vol. I, p. 191 and p. 248.

64 Rennell, *Memoir of the Map of Indostan*, p. 62.

65 For details, *vide* my *Bengal Subah*, Vol. I, pp. 369 86.

66 Letter to Court, 3rd January, 1740.

67 Stavorinus, Vol. I, pp. 474.78; Raynal, *The Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of the Europeans in the East, and West Indies*, Vol I, p. 319

68 Plaisted's Journal.

69 Letter to Court, 11th August, 1745, para. 7.

70 Letters to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 85; 30th November, 1746, para. 21.

71 Letter to Court, 10th February, 1748, para. 60.

72 Consultations, 23rd October, 1752. Dimities—stout cotton fabrics woven with raised stripes on fancy figures and used for bedroom hangings.

73 Letter to Court, 20th August, 1751, para. 45.

74 Letter to Court, 11th November, 1741, para. 99

75 Letter to Court, 24th February, 1748, para. 101.

various species of cloths [76] like *chucklaes* (*cāklās*, cloths made of silk and cotton), *piniascoes*,[77] *ginghams*,[78] and *sannoes* (sānus, flaxen or linen cloth).

Organisation of the Factories.

The chiefs and the subordinate officers of the factories were under the effective control of the Council in Calcutta. On the 29th July, 1745, the Council ordered that no Indian servants, employed in the Company's factories, should do any private work of the factors, that list of *baniāns* and *gomastās*, engaged by the factories, should be duly forwarded to it, and that all merchants' and *assamies*' [79] accounts should be yearly balanced and signed by the merchants.[80]

(a) Effective control of the Council in Calcutta over the Chiefs and the subordinate officers in the factories.

The Council regularly inspected the goods sent by the different factories, demanded explanations from the factors Chiefs if they sent goods of bad quality, and even sometimes returned these to them [81] with strong orders and instructions to improve the quality of investments in the future.[82] A parcel of cloths sent to Calcutta by the Dacca factors on the 25th February, 1753, was returned to them as the cloths had not been properly dressed.[83] While inspecting on the 12th November, 1752, eighty-seven and eighty-nine bales of cloths, sent by the Dacca factors to Calcutta, on the 6th September, and the 10th October respectively, the

[76] Letter to Court, 11th August, 1745, para. 14.

[77] According to Birdwood, made of pineapple fibre. Cactus fibres were used for coarse clothes even in the 19th century in Hijli coast (Midnāpur) and elsewhere, where cactus of different varieties grew wild. 'Piniasco' apparently represents a Bengali or Oriyā original '*Panasika*' or 'Panaska,' meaning woven out of '*panasa*' or pineapple fibres (of the cactus class).

[78] "A kind of stuff described in Draper's Dictionary as made from cotton yearn dyed before being woven. The Indian ginghams were apparently sometimes of cotton mixt with some other material." Yule and Burnel, *Hobson-Jobson*, p. 287.

[79] "A cultivator, a tenant, a renter, a nonproprietory cultivator; a dependant; also a debtor, a culprit, a criminal, a defendant in suit." Wilson's Glossary, p. 35.

[80] Letter to Court, 4th February, 1746, para 18.

[81] Letter to Court, 4th January, 1754, para. 77.

[82] Letter to Court, 7th December, 1754, para. 71.

[83] Letter to Court, 4th January, 1754, para. 77.

members of the Council in Calcutta found that these " were very ill-sorted (and that there was) too great a difference from outside folds to the inside ones. The *Baftās* in particular were badly dressed, the inside Folds very thin and the Fabricks (fabrics) very bad. " [84] They, therefore, directed the Dacca factors not to procure such cloths unless the said defects were removed. They also observed that " the flowered work (on clothes) in general was worked with too coarse a thread, the flowers very indifferently worked and the inside ones extremely bad ; " [85] and instructed the Dacca factors " to be more careful in the provision of Investment for the future " and to remove the defects of the flowered goods, " particularly that of working the flowers with a coarse thread." [86] Similarly, while inspecting the goods sent by the Cāssimbāzār factory in the year 1753, the Council in Calcutta saw that the ' *guzerat* ' [86a] silk was of a very bad quality. So it " took out of several bales a small quantity of each letter [86b] and sent it to the gentlemen there (Cāssimbāzār factory) that they might compare them with the musters (samples) they contracted on," and also demanded from them " sufficient reasons for so great a difference in the quality of the silk." [87]

The Company's servants, who received employments in the factories, were required to furnish securities. Agreeably to the orders of the Court of Directors, the Council in Calcutta decided on the 8th March, 1746, that the Chiefs of the Cāssimbāzār, Patna, and Dacca factories, should give security of Rs. 50,000 each, the Chiefs of the Jugdeā and Balasore factories Rs. 30,000 each, members of the Council in the subordinate factories Rs. 16,000 each, and the writers Rs. 8,000 each. [88]

[84] *Ibid*, para. 93. [85] *Ibid*. [86] *Ibid*.

[86a] ' *Guzerat* ' seems to apply to a special brand of silk, probably manufactured by Gujarātī silk-weavers, who were scattered all over India, or to silk from Gujarāt.

[86b] In the factories of the Company, different letters (such as A, B, C, etc.) were marked on bales of silk and cotton piecegoods to distinguish their quality.

[87] Letter to Court, 4th January, 1754, para. 71.

[88] Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1740, para. 122.

(b) The Chiefs and the subordinate officers of the factories allowed to carry on private trade ; employment of Indian soldiers, sepoys and females in the factories.

The Chiefs of the factories and their assistants, drawing small salaries, were allowed to carry on private trade and to enjoy its profits.[89] Indian soldiers and sepoys were employed to guard the factories and escort the goods from the *aurungs* to the factories and thence to Calcutta.[90] It is interesting to note that Indian female labour was employed in the Company's factories, chiefly at the Dacca factory, for flowering and embroidery works on cloths.[91] The Council in Calcutta often sent to the Dacca factory species of cloths, like *humums*,[92] *Cossajura mulmulls* (*malmals* manufactured at Kāśijorā in Midnāpur district), Cossajura *dooreas* (striped cloths manufactured at Kāśijorā), etc., to get these *flowered*.[93] Women continued to be employed for such work in the factories of the Company till the early 19th century.[94]

Meaning of Investment.

Lists of investments to be collected each year, and bullion[95] or money to purchase these, were sent by the Council in Calcutta to the factories usually in the beginning of each year.[96] *Musters* (samples) of raw silk and silk cotton piecegoods, according to which these were to be purchased, were also sent at the same time.

89 Taylor, pp. 87-88.

90 *Ibid* ; Letters to Court, 11th December, 1741, para. 95; 3rd February, 1743, para. 84; 2nd February, 1747, para. 79.

91 Letter to Court, 11th December, 1741 para. 105.

92 *Hāmāms*, thick cloths used as wrappers in the cold season and not bath-sheets as some suggest.

93 Letters to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 62 and 31st January, 1746, para. 39.

94 Buchanan, *Patna-Gaya Report*, Vol. II, p. 665. Up to the time of the Great War (when the Turkish market was lost to Dacca), the employment of women in embroidery and flowering work (chiefly *kashidā* work) was common.

95 The Cāssimbāzār factory usually received bullion as it could get coins in exchange from the Seths of Murshidābād, while the other factories were supplied with *sicca* rupees or Arcot rupees.

96 Letter to Court, 19th February, 1741, paras. 17 and 18, and 15th February, 1742, paras. 13 and 15.

The factories procured goods through *dālāls* (brokers), who entered into contracts to supply these within a specified time. These *dālāls* received *dādni* or advance money from the agents of the factories to the amount of half or three-fourths of the estimated value of the goods, in order to be able to give necessary advances to the weavers.[97] At times, such advances were made to the merchants and the weavers directly. Thus, by advancing money to the *dālāls*, merchants, and manufacturers, the "Company were invested with a prior right to the goods for which they contracted, and hence their purchase in India acquired the name of investment."[98]

Strict control of the Company over the merchants.

The Company always tried to maintain a strict control over the merchants, who had to give securities on receiving *dādni*, and were often warned against providing cloths of inferior quality.[99] It sometimes exacted penalties from them on the balance of raw silk and silk and cotton piecegoods, if they failed to make good their contracts in time.[100] When they could not pay the balance of *dādni* due from them, or the penalties charged, their securities were held responsible for their debts.[101] On failure of contracts, the merchants were sometimes liable even to be confined.[102] The Company insisted on settling the accounts of the merchants in its factories, and did not like that 'subjects of this country' (people of Bengal) should arbitrate in these affairs.[103]

Influence of the *dālāls*.

The *dālāls*, though engaged by the Company for commercial facilities, occasionally created troubles for it. By the year 1752, the Calcutta *dālāls* acquired much influence in trade circles. They organised themselves into a regular union, and used to hold meetings

97 Taylor, pp. 87-88.
98 Grant, *History of the East India Company*, p. 67; Verelst, p. 84.
99 Letter to Court, 11th December, 1741, para. 86 and 10th January, 1748, para. 201.
100 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 9.
101 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 15.
102 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, para. 43.
103 Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748, para. 250.

in Calcutta to determine beforehand the prices to be charged for piecegoods from the English.[104] In the month of October of the same year, the Dacca *dālāls* secured a *parwānah* from the Nawāb, authorising them to have the "cloth business of Jugdeā and all the Dacca *Aurungs* in their own hands."[105] Sometimes, the *dālāls* felt no scruple in hindering the Company's trade by charging exorbitant commissions : as for example, in 1754 the *dālāls* at Jugdeā charged from the Company 15 p. c. beyond the price of goods, and argued that it was customary for them to receive such *dasturies*.[106]

Changed method of procuring investments since 1753.

Since the month of June, 1753, the Company changed its method of procuring investments. It then resorted to the practice of getting goods direct from the *aurungs* by sending there *gomastās* or agents, instead of contracting with the merchants of Bengal,[107] who were informed that they were no longer *dādni* merchants of the Company.[108] The reasons for this change were the frequent failures of the merchants to supply the full quantity of goods according to the terms of the contracts, and their demands for *dādni* at the rate of 85 p. c. of the prices of goods.[109]

Favourable opinion of the Court of Directors on the new method of collecting investments.

The Court of Directors expressed a favourable opinion on the new method of collecting investments, and also sent some instructions for future guidance to the Council in Calcutta in their letter, dated the 31st January, 1755. They urged on the necessity of being careful about the conduct of the servants at the factories, and of forming a supervising committee to look after investments in different factories and

104 Consultations, 25th September, 1752.

105 Consultations, 23rd October, 1752.

106 Consultations, 6th May, 1754.

Dasturi—"A fee, a perquisite, a commission, specially a fee claimed by cashiers or servants on articles purchased or on payments made." Wilson's Glossary, p. 129.

107 Consultations, 4th June, 1753.

108 *Ibid.*

109 *Ibid.*

aurungs.[110] Accordingly, a committee consisting of four members, Mr. Roger Drake, the President of the Council in Calcutta, Mr. Charles Manningham, Mr. Richard Becher, and Mr. William Frankland, was constituted for the supervision of the factories and the *aurungs*.[111] Encouraged by the favourable attitude of the Court of Directors, the Council in Calcutta decided unanimously on the 10th March, 1755, that the method of making purchases directly at the *aurungs* should be continued.[112]

Formation of a Committee.

But this method did not prove satisfactory. By it the *gomastās* and the agents of the Company were entrusted with powers "which they frequently abused to their own emolument; and an authority given to enforce a just performance of engagements, became, notwithstanding the utmost vigilance of the higher servants (of the Company), a source of new oppression."[113] Their influence "proved so destructive of industry,"[114] during the years immediately following the battle of Plassey, that the Council in Calcutta restored "the old method of forming the investment by contracting with merchants in different parts of the country."[115]

Defects of the new method; —restoration of the old one.

During the period under review, the East India Company's trade and investments were occasionally interrupted by various factors, which had their origin in the general disorders of the time. Political disturbances within a country invariably affect its economic condition. So, when Bengal was being tormented by invasions from outside, and troubles within,

Interruptions to the E. I. Co.'s investments due to general disorders of the time :—

110 *Vide* Appendix, 'E.'
111 Letter to Court, 8th December, 1755, para. 52.
112 Letter to Court, 11th September, 1755, para. 18.
113 Verelst, p. 85.
114 *Ibid.*
115 *Ibid.*

her traders could hardly expect a smooth and easy way of commerce.

(a) The Marātha invasions.

The Marātha invasions appeared as a terrible calamity to the province, affecting the different aspects of the economic life of its people. "Every evil, attending a destructive war," remarks Mr. Holwell, "was felt by this country (Bengal) in the most eminent degree; a scarcity of grain in all parts, the wages of labour greatly enhanced; trade, foreign and inland, labouring under every disadvantage and oppression." [115a] This profoundly influenced the English Company's investments. Mr. Orme writes:—"The Marattoes (Marāthas) during the war made only one considerable depredation on the English trade. This was in the year 1748, when they stopped a fleet of boats (in charge of Ensign English) coming from Cossimbazar (Cāssimbāzār) to Calcutta,[116] and plundered it of 300 bales of raw silk belonging to the Company. But the advantages of the European commerce in general were much impaired by the distress of the province, which enhanced the prices and debased the fabrics of all kinds of manufactures." [117]

There are copious references in the contemporary records of the English Company to show how heavily the Marātha raids told upon its trade in Bengal. The Marātha plunders in the month of May, 1742,[118] "put a stop to all business, the Merchants and weavers flying (from) wherever they (the Marāthas) came." [119] The Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on the 3rd February, 1743:— "Are greatly concerned, Investment falls short this season, and some goods not so good as usual by Dearness of Provisions, excessive price of cotton and Troubles by Morattas." [120] Not to speak of the interior parts of West Bengal,

115a Holwell, I. H. E., p. 151.
116 *Vide ante*, pp. 102-103.
117 Orme, *Indostan*, Vol. II, p. 46.
118 *Vide ante*, pp. 70-74.
119 Letter to Court, 31st July, 1742, para. 10.
120 Para. 67.

even in Calcutta the Council experienced much difficulty in procuring goods, and it informed the Court of Directors (in 1743): "Fear Great Difficulties in providing goods at Calcutta from the Damages done in the country by the late trouble." The second Marātha invasion (March to May, 1743) was also "attended with all the unhappy consequences of the Last, their route much the same, nothing but towns were actually burnt. The Nabob's (Nawāb's) troops also plundered greatly so that the people deserted the *Aurungs* where *Gurrahs* are made, and an entire stop was put to business for some time at Calcutta, Cossimbāzār (Cāssimbāzār) and Patna."[121] The Company suffered much loss in its '*dādni*' paid to the merchants, because the latter could neither supply any goods in exchange, nor could return the money.[122] In June, 1745, the Marāthas renewed their ravages with great vigour, which occasioned much confusion in the province and hit the Company's business hard in the several *aurungs*.[123] This time they entered Bihār, plundered Futwah, captured there 4,200 pieces of cloths belonging to the English Company, and also burnt a godown wherein 7,168 maunds of saltpetre had been deposited. So, in that season, the Company could not get any supply of saltpetre and cloths from Patna.[124] On returning from Bihār, the main body of the Marāthas encamped at Katwah, while some of their detachments roamed over different parts of West Bengal. This prevented the Company from getting *gurrahs* in sufficient quantity.[125] The chief of the Cāssimbāzār factory wrote to the Council in Calcutta on the 17th February, 1746, that "the Marattoes still continuing near

121 Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743, para. 10.

122 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 69.

123 Letter to Court, 11th August, 1745, para. 9.

124 Letter to Court, 31st January, 1746 paras. 111-14.

125 Letter to Court, 4th February, 1746, paras. 16 and 18. "Am sorry, cannot send the quantity of Gurrahs ordered, Morattoes situation on the Island of Cossim bazar preventing all Intercourse and no goods received since these people have been there." Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1746, para. 13.

them makes it impossible to send the bales down with safety." [126] When in April, 1746, the Council in Calcutta demanded explanations from the merchants for their failure to supply the full quantity of *gurrahs* according to contracts, they replied that "the troubles in the country prevented their compliance with the contracts in that article (*gurrahs*) as the Marattoes were chiefly in that part of the country where the *gurrahs* are provided." [127] The Company's Resident at Balasore wrote to the Council on the 25th January, 1747, that the encampment of Mir Habib (a friend of the Marāthas) at a distance of two miles from Balasore, with 8,000 cavalry and 20,000 infantry, [128] had put an entire stop to the collection of the Company's investments at that factory, because "all the workmen had run away and the washermen were taken up to labour for Meer (Mir) Habib so that a great deal of cloth lies ready at the weaver's house and cannot be dressed." [129] It is clear from several references in the records of the time that the troubles due to the Marātha invasions continued to be acute till the conclusion of the treaty between the Nawāb and the Marāthas in the year 1751; and even after that the general economic decline caused by these invasions greatly affected the Company's investments. [130]

(*b*) The Mug incursions.

The eastern part of Bengal remained, indeed, free from the Marātha raids, but there the annual incursions of the Mugs from Chittagong and Arracan proved to be a terrible impediment in the path of the Company's investments. Every year the Mugs infested the Sunderban channels and occasionally extended their ravages as far as Buz Buz. The Portuguese "were at times their partners in their forays." [130a] On the 30th September, 1742, ten

[126] Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 92.
[127] Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 9.
[128] *Vide ante*, p. 101.
[129] Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 110.
[130] Letter to Court, 9th September, 1751.
[130a] Long, p. 39.

Europeans were sent from Calcutta to Jugdeā, as the English factory there had been attacked by the Mugs.[131] The chief of the Dacca factory informed the Council in Calcutta on the 21st November, 1746, of the "Mugs being very troublesome between that place and Bakergunge (Bākarganj) and that they had plundered some Boats belonging to the English."[132] Early in 1748 the Mugs caused "great mischief about Dacca."[133] The French traders at Jugdeā also entertained a fear of Mug incursions during the years 1750 and 1751.[134] On the 16th November, 1752, the Chief of the Jugdeā factory requested the Council in Calcutta "to order the Pinnace to be with them (the Jugdeā factors) by the end of the next month for the safe conveyance of their cloth and a chest of good powder with a lanthorn or two," as the time of Mug raids was drawing near.[135] The Mug menace continued to cause trouble for the English later on, and it excited such terror that about 1760 A.D., the Council in Calcutta put a chain across the Hugli river at the bottom of Garden Reach near the modern Botanical Garden.[136]

(c) Advance of Safdar Jang.

Other political disorders within the province also hindered the collection of investments by the Company. Owing to the advance of Safdar Jang into Bihār in December, 1742, the Company's investments at that time from the Patna factory fell short.[137] Except two chinted handkerchiefs no *chintz* (printed or spotted cotton cloth) and *laccowries*[138] were available, and in the beginning of the year 1743 the Council in Calcutta received from Patna only

131 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 85.

132 Letter to Court, 22nd February 1747, para. 72.

133 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, paras. 75 and 76.

134 *Correspondance du Conseil de Chandarnagor avec divers*, 2nd partie, pp. 397-99 and 410-11.

135 Consultations, 4th December, 1752.

136 Long, p. 39, footnote.

137 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, paras. 57 and 58.

138 These refer to cloths manufactured at Lākhwār (near Patna), which was an important centre of cotton industry since the 17th century.

12,212 bags of saltpetre at four rupees a maund. Similarly, the Afghān insurrections of 1745 and 1748,[139] and the consequent disorders and confusion within Bengal, prejudiced the trade of the Europeans to some extent. On the 29th January, 1745, the Chief of the English factory at Cāssimbāzār wrote to the Council in Calcutta that, in view of the dispute between the Nawāb and Mustafā Khān, it would not be prudent to "make any absolute contract or advance Dadni."[140] The insurrection of 1748 being more furious than that of 1745 greatly affected the European Companies. Its leader Shamshir Khān "demanded a General tax from the 3 European Factorys (factories—the English, the Dutch, and the French) of 40 or 50 thousand rupees,"[141] and his soldiers plundered the Dutch factory at Futwah "of white cloth and other goods to the amount of 65,000 Rupees."[142]

(d) The Afghān insurrections.

The political disturbances in Bengal further subjected the European Companies to the payment of contributions to the Nawāb's government. In general, Alivardi's conduct towards the European traders was fair and just,[143] but under the pressure of immense troubles, he was compelled to exact money from them on several occasions, on the ground that those who enjoyed benefits of trade in his province must also share the expenses incurred for its defence.[144]

(e) Exactions of the Nawāb.

Occasional interferences in the affairs of the Company's factories by the officers of the Nawāb's government, scattered in different parts of the country, sometimes affected their business.[145] The

(f) Conduct of the Nawāb's officers.

139 *Vide ante*, Chapter IV.

140 Letter to Court, 9th February, 1745, para. 127.

141 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, para. 56; Consultations, June, 1748.

142 Consultations, 8th March, 1748.

143 *Vide ante*, Chapter V.

144 *Vide ibid.*

145 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, paras. 82-84; *ibid*, 2nd January, 1752, para. 50; Long, p. 93.

Nawāb, however, tried to redress their grievances on complaints being made to him. Minor internal disputes also sometimes proved to be a hindrance to the Company's merchants in the matter of procuring investments. When on the 12th August, 1751, the Council in Calcutta asked the merchants if they could provide Amorra (?) goods, the latter replied that " the Rājah of that place was dead, his brothers (were) quarreling about the succession and their mother (was) endeavouring to put the government into the hands of a third person, (so) they could not think of venturing to send their money thither to provide Goods, being afraid during these troubles their *Gomasthās* would be plundered." [146]

(g) Minor internal disputes.

Political disorders and some other factors [147] caused dearness of provisions, and high prices of cotton, indigo, and other materials, which considerably affected the Company's investments, as their merchants, *dālāls*, and *gomastās* being thereby reduced to straitened circumstances very often failed to make good their contracts duly, and also often demanded high prices and ready money to purchase goods. [148] It is clear from several contemporary references [149] that this state of things continued all throughout the period.

(h) Dearness of provisions and high prices of articles.

The acute currency disorders of the time very often disturbed the Company's investments. To purchase investments in Bengal, the English Company at that time imported bullion from England, [150] which was exchanged here for coins in the banks of Jagat Seth and other *shroffs*. [151]

(i) Currency troubles.

146 Letter to Court, 20th August, 1751, para. 54.

147 *Vide* Chapter VIII.

148 Letters to Court, 3rd February, 1743 para. 65; 13th August, 1743, para 11; 30th November, 1746, para. 9; 10th January, 1743, para. 41; Consultations, 13th November, 1752.

149 Letter to Court, 8th December, 1755, paras. 28, 32, 33, 35.

150 In a contemporary tract entitled 'Thoughts on the Present State of Our Trade to India,' by a merchant of London, 1754 (preserved in the Imperial Library, Calcutta), we find a note of protest against the export of bullion from England to India.

151 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 13; 10th January, 1748, para. 43.

But it had to work under certain disadvantages resulting from the multiplicity of coins,[152] which did not always pass for the same value, and were liable to the imposition of varying rates of *bāṭṭā* or discount, proportionately to their period of use. The Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on the 8th January, 1742: "New coined siccas not fluctuating in Trade, shroffs attempted to Raise the Batta, so resolved they should pass at no more than 15½ old siccas at 10, Madras rupees at 10, and Arcot of Weight at 8 Per Cent *Bāṭṭā* to reduce them into current rupees of Calcutta."[153] The Council again wrote on the 3rd February, 1743: "No vend for silver at Calcutta though Morattoes (Marāthas) withdrawn, Mint shut up, so (the) Cossimbazar (factory) sold all the bullion at Sicca rupees 203 per 240 sicca weight."[154]

(j) Scarcity of money and pecuniary trouble of the Company.

The repeated invasions of the Marāthas also occasioned a great scarcity of money in Bengal. The bank of Jagat Seth was robbed by them of a huge amount; sums of realised rents were sometimes plundered by them on the way of their being carried to the Nawāb's treasury; the important market places were, once and again, deprived of their cash and stock; and the ordinary people had to protect their lives by paying money to the rapacious Marātha soldiers.[155] The Nawāb had to purchase Bālāji Rāo's alliance by paying him a large amount, and he had to satisfy his own troops with presents of money and various other gifts.[156] The scarcity of money was further increased by the fact that the *shroffs* and the other wealthy people of West Bengal "transported their money across the Great River (the Ganges)

152 Verelst, Chapter III; Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, Vol. II, pp. 108-09.

153 Para. 173.

154 Para. 46.

155 Compare :—

"Bargite luṭia kata kata bā sujana |
Nānāmate rājāra prajāra gela dhana ||"

Bhāratacandra.

156 *Vide ante*, Chapter III.

for fear of the Marattoes." [157] The President of the Council in Calcutta had, therefore, to write to the Council at Madras on the 5th May, 1746, to send down to Calcutta all the money that had arrived for them, and " as much more as they could spare from their necessary occasions. " In response to this, the Madras Council sent to Calcutta on the 30th June, 1746, ten chests containing Rs. 86,000 in all and a box full of 432 pieces of gold mohurs. [158] The President and Council at Bombay were also requested [159] on the 13th May, 1746, to send to Calcutta whatever they could spare ; and they accordingly despatched from there some quantity of bullion.

At such a time, the Company was occasionally compelled to borrow money for its investments from some Bengal bankers like the Jagat Seths, [160] who had their main bank at Murshidābād with branches in other important cities, Ānandirām and Śrīkriṣṇa of Calcutta, and others. [161] On the 28th August, 1747, the Council in Calcutta advised the Cāssimbāzār factory, then highly embarrassed for want of money, to use their Endeavours to furnish themselves (with money) from Jugut Sett's (Jagat Seth's) house.[162] On the 9th February, 1748, Śrīkriṣṇa and Ānandirām informed the Council through their own *gomastās* that " they had received intelligence from Suratt (Surat) that Two Bills of Exchange for Fifty thousand rupees 50,000 each were drawn on them (by Mr. Wake, President of the Bombay Council) in favour of the Calcutta Council and that they had the money with them which they were ready to pay into their factory at Cāssimbāzār." [163] In view of the

157 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 33; Wafā, f. 18,

158 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 33.

159 *Ibid*, para. 51.

160 Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748, paras. 68, 71, 72, 76, 191, 193, 196, 197, 198. Fatehchānd up to 1744 and Mahātābchānd after him.

161 Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746. The Jagat Seths were then the principal bankers in Bengal, and there were some minor ones in cities like Calcutta and Patna.

162 Letter to Court 10th January, 1748, para. 191.

163 *Ibid*, para. 135.

financial difficulties of the Company, the Council ordered the Cāssimbāzār factors to receive the amount and to send down to Calcutta 50,000 sicca rupees out of it.[164] They were also directed on the 2nd May of the same year to begin collecting investments; but they replied on the 24th May "that it was impracticable to make any (investments) their merchants alledging (alleging) want of money and credit, and pressing for Ballances due them (since) last year for Goods delivered to the amount of 3 Lacks (lacs) of Rupees."[165] In the month of July the merchants began to clamour for ready money due from the Company, and they were kept quiet for some time by the Council's assurance that their demands would be supplied with 'out of the first money that come to hand.'[166] In September they pressed the Cāssimbāzār factors very much to request the Council to send them a part of of the treasure received per 'Bombay Castle,' which had lately arrived in Calcutta. Jagat Seth Mahātābchānd was also angry for not receiving any share of it, though large sums of money had been lent out by him to the English in the different factories. The Council in Calcutta had no other alternative than to humour him, and so wrote the following to the Cāssimbāzār factors: "We should be always glad to serve him when in our power but that the supply of the Bombay Castle was so very small that we could not spare him from our own investment any money that would be satisfactory and therefore hoped he would not take amiss waiting a little longer as we expected a large supply by the later ships."[167] In the following year (1749 A. D.) the Cāssimbāzār factory repeated its pressing demand for money, especially for the five chests of bullion which had been reserved for it. But considering that the "charges would run very high in sending a large Party of Guards with so small a sum of treasure," the Council sent instead a bill of exchange from one Rāmkrishṇa Seth for Rs.

164 *Ibid*, para. 151.

165 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, para. 46.

166 *Ibid*, paras. 47 and 49.

167 Letter to Court, 22nd December, 1748, para. 11.

23,400 on the 6th April. [168] The other factories suffered similarly from scarcity of money. On the 16th April, 1748, the Council in Calcutta also sent the Dacca factors 8 chests of bullion, [168a] which they disposed of by the middle of June, and by the middle of July their "business was at a stand-still for want of money." [169] The Dacca factory wrote to the Council in Calcutta on the 25th July "complaining that if money be not soon sent them, they should be able to make but a small investment and have no '*Puttun* (*Patni*) [170] *Goods*' and that they could take no money there or at least under 12 per cent. (interest) which if (the Council) approved of giving they would try what sums could be had." [171] The Council wrote to the Cāssimbāzār factors to help those at the Dacca factory with money from Jagat Seth's house, [172] and by about the third week of August the Dacca factors received from the Cāssimbāzār factory a note on Jagat Seth's house for 25,000 sicca rupees. But they again complained in their letter to the Council, dated the 23rd August, that that sum too would not suffice for their investments. [173] On the 15th November they informed the Council of their inability "to proceed in their investment, not having wherewithal to defray their monthly expenses, no one being willing to lend them one Rupee as the Company's ships were not arrived with treasure." [174] But they got some relief on soon receiving Rs. 50,000 from the Cāssimbāzār factory.

(*k*) Irresponsible conduct of the Company's servants—

The interests of the Company were, now and then, prejudiced by the irresponsible conduct of some of its servants. We find two striking instances of this in the conduct of Sir Francis Russel at the Cāssimbāzār factory, and of Mr. Humffreys Cole at the Patna

168 Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749, para. 23.

168a Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, paras. 69 and 70.

169 *Ibid*, paras. 72 and 73.

170 Goods commissioned or manufactured to order.

171 Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748, para. 76.

172 *Ibid*, para. 72.

173 *Ibid*, para. 73.

174 *Ibid*, para. 76.

factory. Sir Francis Russel took charge of the Cāssimbāzār factory from Mr. Richard Eyre on the 1st April, 1741, and died of jaundice and dropsy on the 26th February, 1743. During his incumbency at Cāssimbāzār, he did not properly settle the accounts of the local merchants, [175] four of whom applied to the Company, after his death, for 14,000 rupees, which were due on account of *dadni* (advance money), though "they had signed Receipts for the full Dadney (*dadni*) but left that sum in Sir Francis' hands for which he gave notes of Hand." [176] Fatehchānd also demanded Rs. 25,000, which Sir Francis Russel had borrowed from him on his personal account, by sending his handnote to the Chief of the Cāssimbāzār factory, who thereupon replied that administrators had already been appointed by the Mayor's Court in Calcutta to settle the affairs of Sir Francis Russel, and that after all his property was collected, proportional distribution would be made among his creditors. But the *gomastās* of Fatehchānd told him that his master knew nobody but the Company. To avoid further troubles, the majority of the Council in Calcutta agreed to accommodate matters with Fatechānd, "who would take nothing less than the Principal," but he was temporarily satisfied when the chief of the Cāssimbāzār factory gave him a handnote to cover the interest for 25,000 rupees. [177]

Russel at Cāssimbāzar.

Cole at Patna

The mal-administration of the Patna factory by Mr. Humffreys Cole, [178] who had been appointed to succeed Mr. Barker to the chiefship of that factory in 1732 [179] and served in that capacity till 1743, also gave rise to immense troubles for the Company. He did not settle accounts with Omichānd, his brother Deepchānd, [180]

175 Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743, para. 31.

176 *Ibid.* para. 33.

177 Letter to Court, 5th December, 1743, paras. 12-16.

178 Letter to Court, 8th November, 1744, para. 18.

179 Consultations, 20th July, 1732, contained in "Bengal Letters to the Coast and Bay, 1731-33."

180 A letter from Chandernagore to Mr. Huyghens, the Dutch Director at Hughli, dated 30th October, 1746, refers to Deepchānd as *faujdār* of Chuprah.

and some other merchants of Patna, but put all of them under confinement when they clamoured for the adjustment of their accounts. They were, however, released on the intervention of the Nawāb's government in December, 1742, and after Mr. Cole's departure from Patna, demanded of the Company a fair settlement of their old accounts. The Council in Calcutta appointed a body of supervisors to enquire into the causes of the troubles at Patna, and to remove the complaints of the merchants, if found true. The supervisors reached Patna on the 21st October, 1746,[181] but, in spite of their best efforts, could not improve the deplorable state of affairs there, owing to the absence of any records and of co-operation and support of Mr. Cole or any of his servants.[182] The consequent loss of the Company led the Council in Calcutta to decide, on the 28th October, 1747, that the Patna factors "should hold themselves in readiness for withdrawing their factory sometime in January next."[183] The Patna factory had to be actually withdrawn about the end of the year 1748,[184] and was not re-established till 1757.[185]

(*l*) Exaction at the custom-houses.

In spite of the *firmans* of the Emperor Shujā (1656 A.D.) and Farrukhsiyar (1717 A.D.), the Company's trade was occasionally liable to "impositions and exactions"[186] at the *chowkies* (custom-houses), "planted up and down the country" and also at the *ferry ghāṭs*.[187] Its vessels were sometimes stopped by the Nawāb's officers at the *chowkies*, and the *ferry ghāṭs*, and could not be released without payment of duties, more than usual,[188] and also

181 Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 155.

182 *Bengal Subah*, Vol. I, pp. 213-25.

183 Letter to Court, 10th January 1748, para. 255.

184 Grose, Vol. II, pp. 639-42.

185 Letter to Court, 20th August, 1757.

186 Letter to Court, 8th December, 1755, para. 96.

187 *Ghāṭ*="A landing place, steps on the bank of a river, a quay, a wharf where customs are commonly levied."—*Wilson's Glossary*, p. 175.

188 Letter to Court, 19th November, 1748, para. 50.

dasturis,[189] The Council in Calcutta complained several times to the Nawāb against these illegal exactions,[190] and at length succeeded, largely through the efforts of Mr. Watts, the chief of the Cāssimbāzār factory (since 1752), in obtaining "an ample Perwannah (*parwānah*) both from the Great (Alivardi) and Chuta Nabobs (probably refer to Deputy Governors) directed to all Subahs, Rajas (Rājāhs), Zamindars forbidding them on pain of their highest displeasure to molest or detain any conveyances with the English Dustucks (*dastaks*) on any pretence whatever."[191] This *parwānah* was "so strongly worded" as to lead the Company to entertain "great hopes that it will prevent any interruptions or Exactions from those chowkeys (*chowkies*) in time to come."[192] The Nawāb informed all *Rāhādārs*,[193] *Guzarbāns*,[194] *Chowkeydārs* (watchmen), *Izārdārs*,[195] and all the *Golls*,[196] within the jurisdiction of the '*pechowtrah*'[197] of Murshidābād, "that agreeably to the complaint made by the Gomasthas (*gomastās*) of the English Company the Nabob (Nawāb) granted them a *perwannah* (*parwānah*) for all the *Ghaṭs* (ferries) in the Soubaship of Bengal, that contrary to their ancient customs no new Imposition be laid on their Goods by the Rahadary's, etc. Because they have a Phirmound (*firman*) from the King (Delhi Emperor) as also Senauds (*sanads*) of former Subahs exempting them from such impositions."[198] He also fixed the rates of duties to be realised from the Company's vessels at the *ghāṭs*.[199]

189 *Vide* Appendix II. *Dasturi*="A fee, a perquisite, a commission, specially a fee claimed by cashiers and servants on articles purchased, or, on payments made."—*Wilson's Glossary*, p. 129.

190 Letter to Court, 8th December, 1752, para. 96.

191 *Ibid.* 192 *Ibid.*

193 "A collector of tolls or transit duties."

194 "An officer appointed to take tolls both on the high roads and at the ferries."

195 "A farmer of any item of public revenue, whether from land, customs, or any other sources; the renter of a village or estate at a stipulated rate."—*Wilson's Glossary*, p. 214.

196 *Golā*="A grain or salt store, or market; a place where it is sold wholesale."—*Ibid*, p. 18.

197 *Pachotrā*, H. Orig. *Pañchotrā*=a custom or toll house for inland traffic.

198 *Vide* Appendix G. 199 *Ibid.*

(*m*) Competition of the European and the Asiatic traders.

The English Company had to encounter the competition of the other European and the Asiatic traders. It is not true that the Dutch were the only European rival of the English Company in the field of Bengal's commerce in the mid-eighteenth century. Other European traders, like the French,[200] the Portuguese, the Prussians and the Danes, as well as the Asiatic traders, like the Armenians, the Mughals, the Pāthāns, and some others, were then actively engaged in trade in different parts of Bengal. They sent their *gomastās* to the *aurungs* who enhanced the prices of cloths, and other articles, to the great inconvenience of the English factors.[201] Thus, in 1741, the price of saltpetre at Patna rose to six '*Ely*' (*hāli* or current rupees) owing to the competition of the local Dutch factors with the English traders.[202] In 1744, the English factors at Dacca experienced great troubles in procuring *tanjeebs* (a variety of cotton cloth) and *mulmulls* (*malmals*, a variety of fine muslin), as the Pāthāns, the Mughals, and the Armenians had raised their prices to a high degree.[203] In 1751, the merchants in Calcutta demanded of the Company advance money to purchase some varieties of cloths, "as the French and the Dutch by having made large contracts for them enhanced their prices."[204] Mr. Nicholas Clerimbault, chief of the Dacca factory since 1749,[205] wrote to the Council in Calcutta on the 14th September, 1752, that on account of the "emulation of the French lately settled there," he was compelled to purchase more cloths of inferior quality than should have been done, "to prevent the Company (from) being disappointed in quantity ordered."[206]

200 Correspondance du Conseil, etc., 2nd partie, pp. 331-42.

201 Letter to Court, 11th December, 1741, paras. 106 and 135; *ibid*, 3rd August, 1744, paras. 14, 15, 16, 19; *ibid*, 20th August, 1751, para. 46; Consultations, 25th September, 1752; Letter to Court, 8th December, 1755, paras. 28 and 31.

202 Letter to Court, 30th January, 1742, para. 5.

203 Letter to Court, 3rd August, 1744, para. 19.

204 Letter to Court, 20th August, 1751, para. 46.

205 Letter to Court, 10th August, 1749, para. 24.

206 Consultations, 25th September, 1752.

The English Company's trade was subject also to occasional interruptions from some or other local Zamindārs. In 1741, Mr. Henry Campion, while coming from Bencoolen on 'Princess Augusta' with two Europeans and some '*lascars*,' landed ashore in Orissā for water and provisions. The Rājah of Conica (Konikā) then detained him and his party, and demanded 2,000 rupees, a piece of scarlet cloth, and a gold watch, for their release. The Company had to purchase it by satisfying his demands.[207] In 1748, goods belonging to some merchants of the Company were stopped at Hajiruhatee (?) by Rājah Aunoopanian (?), and a portion of these was lost.[208] In the same year, the Zamindār of Pultah (Fultah) stopped several boats having English *dastaks*, and exacted money from the Company's merchants.[209] In 1755, Rājah Tilakchānd of Burdwān[210] stopped the Company's business within his jurisdiction by putting *chowkies* (guards) upon all the Company's factories there, and by imprisoning its *gomastās*. The Council in Calcutta considered it to be an extremely insolent and unjustifiable step, and decided that the President should "prepare an address to the Nawāb, and send up a *chubdār*[211] immediately with it, complaining of the Rājah's insolence and unwarranted proceedings in stopping the Honourable Company's business transacted in his provinces and seizing their effects," and that he should insist upon "a proper reprimand being sent to the Rajah and the usual currency given to the Company's affairs at the

(n) Obstructions from the Zamindārs.

207 Letter to Court, 11th January, 1742, para. 189.

208 Consultations, April, 1748.

209 *Ibid.*

210 The cause of the misunderstanding was this:—Rāmjiban Kavirāj, a *gomastā* of the Burdwān Rājah, owed Rs. 6,357 to Mr. John Wood. The latter, failing to secure the payment of the amount, lodged a complaint against Rāmjiban in the Mayor's Court, and having obtained a warrant of sequestration against him, sealed up the Rājah's house and effects in Calcutta. This gave a great offence to the Rājah.—Consultations, 1st April, 1755.

211 "A staff bearer. A necessary attendant in the train of some great men who proclaimed the approach of visitors and carried in his hands a large silver staff of about five feet long."

aurungs situated in his jurisdiction." [212] This representation to the Nawāb produced the desired effect as he immediately ordered the Burdwān Rājah to remove all restraints upon the Company's trade. [213]

Retaliatory measures were not lacking on the part of the Company when urgently needed. In August, 1746, the native officer in charge of the *chowki* at Rangasoulā [214] "growing very troublesome, stopping sloops and boats," the Council in Calcutta ordered one of its officers to proceed there with twenty men, to seize his *chowki*, and bring him up as a prisoner. On his return from Ragasoulā, on the 28th September, after having recovered all the boats of the Company detained there, the officer informed the members of the Council that though on his arrival there the Zamindār (of Fultah) had opened fire on them, yet "he landed his men and burnt the *chowki*," whereupon the said Zamindār "made good his escape into the neighbouring jungles, and sent an assurance that he would never stop any more boats with English colours." [215] In the same month, Dulput Rāy, an agent of Mir Jāfar, [216] stopped at Hugli some boats bearing the Company's *dastaks*, and took these to Cutdalpara (?), with a view to distributing the goods among his men. When the Company's *vakils* complained against it to the *nāib faujdār* of Hugli, the latter declared that he had no hand in the matter, and had no authority over that man. The members of the Council in Calcutta then thought it necessary to recover these boats by force, and accordingly decided to send Captain Robert Hamilton with a party of soldiers for that purpose, and kept two boats in readiness for any future emergency. Captain Robert

Retaliatory measures adopted by the Company.

212 Consultations, 1st April, 1755.

213 Consultations, 5th May, 1755. *Vide* Appendix H.

214 A creek running south of Kulpi into the Hugli river.

215 Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 104.

216 Mir Jāfar, the *Bakhshi* or Army Chief of Alivardi, was then appointed Deputy Governor of Orissā. *Vide ante*, p. 100.

was ordered to proceed up the river Hugli, and to release all boats (with the Company's *dastaks*), that had been stopped, "by fair means if any possible (or) otherwise, to use his utmost force and when he had cleared the Boats to send these bound downwards hither (Calcutta) with a party of soldiers and himself with the remaining men under his command to proceed to Nuddea (Nadiā)," to await there the arrival of some boats of the Company from Cāssimbāzār. [217]

Attempt of the English Company to assert its superior right in the field of trade.

The English Company also tried, during this period, to assert a superior right over others in matters of trade in Bengal. In 1751 the Council in Calcutta strictly warned the '*Blacks*' (native merchants), residing there, against the practice of dealing with the French in goods suitable for the European markets. [218] In the same year, in accordance with the orders of Court of Directors, the Council in Calcutta intimated the Armenians that they must pay consulage on their exports "equally with the covenanted servants," and affixed public notices to the gates of the fort, forbidding all persons living within the limits of the Company's jurisdiction to export any goods from Calcutta without a permit from the consulage-Collector. [219] The free merchants [220] again were 'an eye-sore' to the servants of the Company, as they interfered with their trade. [221] Early in January, 1753, John Wood, a free merchant, applied to the Council in Calcutta for a *dastak*, on the ground that without it he would be reduced to "the condition of a foreigner, or indeed of the meanest black fellow." [222] But this request was not to the

[217] Letter to Court, 22nd February, 1747, para. 105.

[218] Letter to Court, 4th February, 1751, para. 52.

[219] Letter to Court, 20th August, 1751.

[220] The free merchants were "sometimes composed of those who had resigned the Company's service, sometimes of those who had found their way to India and obtained a licence to continue under the Company's protection, and occasionally of traders who were merely present on sufferance."—Hamilton, *Trade Relations*, p. 188.

[221] Long, Introduction, p. xxv.

[222] Consultations, 15th January, 1753. Holwell remarked on it: "The foreign trade of the settlement is become much too general."

liking of the members of the Council in Calcutta. They strongly condemned it in their letter to the Court of Directors, dated the 15th January, 1753: "We beg to represent to your Honours the great prejudice such a liberty would be to the place in general, for if it be permitted, a free merchant by lending his name without any capital of his own and by the assistance and concern of the natives, he may always set voyages on foot of utter destruction of the trade of this settlement in general, and a certain injury to every gentleman in the service."

Abuse of *dastaks*.

One very disquieting feature in the field of Bengal's trade during this period was the abuse of the Company's *dastaks* by its servants. They frequently utilised these in their private trade, and even went so far as to sell these occasionally to some '*black traders*' (native merchants), whose goods were thus taken from one place to another free of duties. In order to prevent this, the Company ordered in 1752 that the names of "the real proprietors of goods should be stated" [223] in the *dastaks*. The European rivals (the Dutch and the French) of the English were also sometimes supplied with goods by the servants of the English Company for their personal gain, and these goods passed free of duties under *dastaks* of the English Company. [224] The Court of Directors wrote to the Council in Calcutta on the 31st January, 1755: "You must be extremely careful to prevent all abuses of the Dusticks (*dastaks*), that the Government may have no pretences to interrupt the trade on that account, which we are afraid they have sometimes too much reason for." [225] This abuse of *dastaks*, besides causing some loss to the Company, deprived the Nawāb's government of a considerable amount of revenue from the source of customs, and was also a cause of great hardship for those poor merchants of Bengal, who had to pay duties for their trade. David Rannie has given a graphic description of the anomalies,

223 Consultations, 9th October, 1752.

224 Court's Letter 31st January, 1755, para. 56

225 *Ibid*, para. 65.

which it produced, in the following words: "The injustice to the Moors (Muhammadans) consisted in that being by their courtesy permitted to live here as merchants, to protect and judge what natives were their servants and to trade custom-free, we under that pretence protected all the Nabab's (Nawāb's) subjects that claimed our protection, though they were neither our servants nor our merchants, and gave our *dustucks* (*dastaks*) or passes to numbers of natives to trade custom-free, to the great prejudice of the Nawāb's revenue, nay more, we levied large duties upon goods brought into our districts from the very people that permitted us to trade custom-free, and by numbers of other impositions (framed to raise the Company's revenue), some of which were ruinous to ourselves such as taxes on marriages, provisions, transferring land property, and caused eternal clamour and complaints against us at Court." [226]

Protest of Sirājuddaulah.

These abuses did not escape the attention of Sirājuddaulah, who complained "that the British had abused the privileges of trade granted them by their firman." But the battle of Plassey soon decided his fate, and the disorders, that followed it, aggravated the abuses. On the 15th July, 1757, Mir Jāfar issued a *sanad* confirming the privileges of the Company in definite and emphatic terms, and he passed orders against hampering English trade in any way. Technically speaking, "with regard to trade no new privileges were asked of Mir Jāfar, none indeed were wanted by the Company who were contended with the terms granted them in 1717 [227]; " but there is no doubt that the victory of the Company at Plassey greatly increased its prestige and influence. No sooner had this influence been felt than "many innovations were practised by some of the Company's servants or the people employed under their authority." [228] They began to trade in

Growth of trade-abuses after Plassey.

[226] Causes of the loss of Calcutta by David Rannie, Hill, Vol. III, p. 384.

[227] Vansittart's Narrative, Vol. I, p. 24.

[228] *Ibid.*

articles " which were before prohibited," and they claimed also exemption from duties not only on the Company's exports and imports but also on all articles in their private trade. Orme has aptly remarked: " . . . . . but as it is the nature of man to err with great changes of fortune, many, not content with the undisputed advantages accruing from the revolution, immediately began to trade in salt and other articles, which had hitherto been prohibited to all Europeans ; . . . . " [229] Their illegal trade continued to grow during the two dyarchies in Bengal between 1757 A.D. and 1772 A.D.

[229] *Indostan*, Vol. II, p. 189.

CHAPTER VIII

General Economic Conditions

1. *Agriculture*

Agriculture an important element in the economic life of the people of Bengal.

Agriculture has always formed an important element in the economic life of the people of Bengal. With her "vast plain of the most fertile soil in the world," and "watered by many navigable rivers," this province "seems marked out by the hand of nature, as the most advantageous region of the earth for agriculture."[1] In addition to irrigation by rivers, canals, and tanks,[2] numerous temporary *bunds* were constructed every season for the storage of rainfall, and these were "kept by the government for the public benefit, every man paying for his portion of a drain."[3]

The chief agricultural products were paddy, wheat, pulses, oil-seeds, jute, sugarcane, tobacco, cotton, betel, etc. Mr. Orme writes: "Rice which makes the greater part of their food is produced in such plenty in the lower parts of the province, that it is often sold at the rate of two pounds for a farthing[4]; a number of other arable grains, and a still greater variety of fruit and culinary vegetables, as well as the spices of their diet, are raised as wanted, with equal ease: sugar, although requiring more attentive cultivation, thrives everywhere . . . ."[5] The European Companies did not export the agricultural goods of

[1] Dow, Vol. I, cxxxvi.
[2] Stavorinus, Vol. I, p. 396.
[3] Parker, *The War in India* pp. 5-6.
[4] *i.e.*, about a pice a seer, or 10 *rs.* a maund.
[5] Orme, Indostan, Vol. II, p. 4.

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Bengal to their countries, but these were, as has been previously pointed out, exported to different parts of India, and to the other countries of Asia.[6]

No important change in the system of land-tenure, or in the mode of revenue-collection, was effected during this period. But the Marātha invasions,[7] and the ravages of the Portuguese and the Mugs,[8] must have greatly injured the interests of the agriculturists of Bengal for the greater part of it. It would be wrong to minimise their influence on the economic condition of the rural areas. In fact, they disturbed the even tenor of life of the bulk of the rural folk. The growing political disorders in the province after 1757, and the oppressions of the *aumils* (government contractors for revenue) after 1765, added to the miseries of the Bengal agriculturists,[9] who had their cup of distress filled to the brim by the great famine of 1770. About the year 1772, Mr. Pattullo observed : "The unwise practice of pushing up the rents every year in Bengal, has afforded a full demonstration of the destructive consequences, by having rendered many of these lands desolate."[10]

Agriculture affected by the calamities of the time.

6 *Vide ante*, p. 181.

7 "Chāṣā kaivarta yata yāya palāiā ।
Bichan baladera piṭhe lāṅgala laiā ॥"
["The agriculturists of the *Kaivarta* caste took to their heels with their ploughs and paddy-seeds on the back of their bullocks."]
Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 305-06. Compare :—
"Chele ghumālo pāḍā jurālo bargī elo deśe ।
Bulbulite dhān kheyeche khājnā diba kise ॥"
["The children have fallen asleep, the quarters have become quiet, (but) the Bargis have entered into our land, the bulbuls (birds) have eaten up paddy-grains; how to pay the rent !"]

8 Their influence was confined to Eastern Bengal just as that of the Marātha invasions extended over Western Bengal.

9 Letter of Richard Becher to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors, 24th May, 1769.

10 Pattullo, *An Essay upon the cultivation of the Lands, and improvements of the Revenues of Bengal*, p. 7.

2. *Markets and Prices of Articles*

Every important city had a *bāzār* or market within its boundary.[11] *Bāzārs* flourished even in places, which were not trade centres.[12] The markets in the cities contained shops of almost every article of necessity as well as luxury, such as paddy, rice, fire-wood, sweet-meats, sugar, *bhurā* (unrefined sugar), milk, ghee, betel-leaves, betel-nuts, mace, nutmegs, sandal, saffron, etc.[13] Rāmaprasāda, a contemporary Bengal writer, thus describes the jewellery and cloth departments of the market in the rich and populous city of Burdwān: "Beyond these the poet (Sundara) saw the king's market with thousands of foreign merchants sitting there. There were hundreds of traders, and shopkeepers, countless gems, pearls, and rubies. There were also various kinds of fine and beautiful clothes, such as, *vanāt* (felt-cloth), *makhmal* (velvet), *paṭṭu*, *bhuṣnāi*[14] *buṭādār* (spotted cloths), *dākāia*,[15] *māldai*,[16] and various other kinds, much liked by the *Āmīrs* (the rich). There were many *bilātī* (foreign) articles of fancy prices or of fashionable designs,[17] which were, however, heaped together for want of customers. Everything was cheap and easily available . . . . . Bāghāi Kotwāl, with pride equal to that of the Lord of Death, and with eyes reddened, was present there on an elephant's back."[18] The towns of Bowānīganj (Bhawāingañj in Māldah

Markets in the cities.

Description of the market at Burdwān.

[11] This is clear from the description of cities in Vijayarāma's *Tirthamaṅgala* (1769 A.D.), where the author has carefully noted the market-places visited by him and his master Kṛṣṇacandrā Ghoṣāla. *Vide* also Stavorinus, Vol. I, pp. 113, 513.

[12] "Nattour has a large bazar but is a place of no trade."—Rennell's *Journals*, p. 83.

[13] Vijayarāma, pp. 39-40; Bhāratacandra, chapter on *Mālinira besātira hisāb*; from this chapter we can also get an idea of the articles of daily consumption in a middle-class family.

[14] Refers to cloths manufactured in Bhūṣnā paraganā of the Dacca District.

[15] Cloths manufactured in the Dacca District.

[16] Cloths manufactured in the Māldah District.

[17] According as we read 'beś kimmater' or 'beś kismater'; the latter is more probable, since in the next sentence the writer speaks of the cheapness of all goods.

[18] Rāmaprasāda, p. 6.

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district), Śibagañj (in the Māldah district), Swarupgañj (in the Māldah district), and Jāmālgañj (in the Dinājpur district) were "famous markets for grain, as their names imply."[19] Bhagwāngolā, situated 18 miles north-east of Berhampore in the Murshidābād district, was an important market for grain, oil, and ghee; there the customs levied on grains exported amounted to three lacs of rupees a year.[20] Ponjeli, standing on the eastern bank of the Hugli river, had a market for corn, and exported a great quantity of rice.[21]

Regulation of the markets.

The city-markets were probably organized and controlled by the Zamindārs in their respective localities. One of the important functions of the *kotwāls* (the Police Inspectors) was to look after the markets, to prevent there all sorts of disorders, to examine the weights and measures as well as the quality of the provisions sold, and to regulate the prices of articles. Anybody, who violated the standard regulations, was subjected to a severe punishment.[22] For retail purchases, *cowries*, which formed the lowest medium of exchange in Bengal, were prevalent.[23]

19 Holwell, I. H. E., p. 193.

20 *Ibid*, p. 194. Compare: "The boats soon reached the market-place at Bhagwāngolā, and all shouted out 'Hari, Hari!' They were highly pleased to see the market, and walked through the whole city on foot. The market, beautiful to look at, extended 4 *kroś* (eight miles), and was full of numerous *sñākhāris* (shell-workers), *kñāsāris* (bell-metal-workers), and weavers. The streets were full of grocers' shops, and they all spoke highly of the market. There were also innumerable grain-*golās* (rice and paddy barns) there."—Vijayarāma, pp 39-40. Vijayarāma gives almost similar descriptions of markets in other cities, such as Rājmahal (*Ibid*, p. 43), Kāligañj (*Ibid*, p. 40), Futwah (*Ibid*, p. 62), Cāssimbāzār (p. 190), Kāṭwah (p. 193), Nadiā (p 203).

21 Grose, Vol. II, p. 236.

22 "No one could sell anything in less than the proper weight, or cheat others by increasing the price. The Gāji punished him who violated the regulations. The customers as well as the shopkeepers were all required to obey his orders. '*Virāśi ojan*' (82 weight) was the standard weight in the market; nowhere was the weight more or less than this standard." *Samasera Gājira Pñuthi—Typical Selections*, Part II, p. 1853.

23 "These being insufficient, I took some *cowries* from others."—Bhāratachandra, Chapter on *Mālīnira besātira hisāb*; Stavorinus, Vol. I, pp 461-62. The value of *cowries* in Bengal varied—according to Bolts, 4,000 to 4,800 *cowries* made a rupee; according to Stavorinus, 4,800 to 5,200; and according to Rickard, 2,560.

During this period there were several *bāzārs* within the Company's jurisdiction in Calcutta, *viz.*, Bara Bāzār, Sobhā Bāzār, Dhobāpārā Bāzār, Hāṭhkholā Bāzar, Bāgh Bāzār, Charles Bāzār, Shyām Bāzar, New Bāzār, Begum Bāzār, Ghāstolā Bāzār, John Nagore, and Gunge or Mondy Bāzār (situated in the district of Govindapur).[24] These markets were profitable sources of income to the Company. Its Collector and Deputy Collector of revenues farmed these out regularly, and realised the due amount of revenues. The farmers levied duties on every article sold in the markets.[25] Corruptions might have been practised in farming these out. Holwell, on assuming the office of Collector in July, 1752,[26] dismissed Govindarāma Mitra, the then 'black collector' (Deputy Collector), for "heavy frauds" in connection with the farming of the Company's *bāzārs* for the years 1749, 1750, and 1751. He pointed out that the farms had not been sold by public auction, or by an outcry, in the presence of the Zamindār, but that the prices had been settled in the house of Govindarāma Mitra, who under fictitious names took most of the good ones for himself, and disposed of the rest, that were more precarious, to his friends and relatives; and that he reported these prices to the Zamindārs for confirmation, and several "*pāṭṭās*"[27] were ordered to be drawn out accordingly.[28] But the majority of the members of the Council in Calcutta were of opinion that Govindarāma "was not accountable for any gains or other advantages that he had

Markets in Calcutta.

Govindarāma Mitra charged with corruption in the matter of farming the Calcutta markets;

he was acquitted by the Council in Calcutta.

[24] Consultations, 9th October, 1752; 'Calcutta in the olden times—its localities' in *Calcutta Review*, 1852.

[25] Holwell, *Indian Tracts*, pp. 210-16.

[26] Holwell, I. H. E., pp. 120-21.

[27] Leases containing description of lands, markets, etc., given to farmers and the amount of rent charged.

[28] Holwell, *Indian Tracts*, pp. 180-82.

gathered on the farms for these three years,'' [29] and so acquitted him.[30]

Price of articles.

During the few years immediately preceding the period under review, the prices of the necessaries of life were cheap. In 1729, these were sold in Murshidābād as follows: (*a*) *bñāśphool* fine rice, first quality, 1 md. 10 seers a rupee, second quality, 1 md. 23 seers a rupee, and third sort, 1 md. 35 seers a rupee; (*b*) coarse *desnā* rice, 4 mds. 25 seers a rupee; (*c*) coarse *poorbie* rice, 4 mds. 25 seers a rupee; (*d*) coarse *munsarah* rice, 5 mds. 25 seers a rupee; (*e*) coarse *kurkāshālee* (*kārkāśāli*) rice, 7 mds. 20 seers a rupee; (*f*) wheat, first quality, was sold 3 mds. a rupee, and second quality, 3 mds. 30 seers a rupee; (*g*) barley was sold 8 mds. a rupee; (*h*) *bhenot* (a kind of grain for feeding, horses), 4 mds. 35 seers a rupee; (*i*) oil (first sort), 21 seers a rupee, (second sort), 24 seers a rupee; (*j*) ghee (first sort), 10½ seers a rupee, (second sort), 11¼ seers a rupee.[31] In 1738, rice was sold at Dacca from 2 mds. 20 seers to 3 mds. a rupee, and *cāpās* (raw cotton), 1 md. for 2 or 2½ rupees.[32]

But, after 1740 the prices of these articles went up in different parts of Bengal. In 1743 the provisions sold so dear at Balasore that the local weavers could purchase rice at the rate of only 10 seers a rupee,[33] and this state of things continued there for a few years.[34] In the same year, the Company's merchants in Calcutta '' represented (that) cotton aad provisions being dear several articles must be advanced in price.''[35] The Council in Calcutta wrote to the Court of Directors on the 3rd February, 1746: '' Rice so excessive Dear, 30 seers only for

29 Public Proceedings, 11th October, 1752.

30 Long, p. 35.

31 *Fort William Revenue Consultations*, dated 29th November, 1776, quoted in *Appendix 15 to the Sixth Report*, 1782.

32 Consultations, 11th December, 1752.

33 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1743, para. 65

34 Letter to Court, 3rd February, 1746, para. 67.

35 Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743, para. 11.

a rupee, ordered the coarse not to be sold in the Bazar under a maund per rupee, land Duty on Grain and rice taken off."[36] In the month of August of the same year, the Company's merchants in Calcutta informed the Council in Calcutta that it was very difficult to provide *gurrahs* owing to "the excessive dearness of cotton.[37] The price of silk was also very high.[38] The Company did not realise the duties on rice and oil for the year 1751, amounting to nearly Rs. 500, in consideration of the great distress and hardship of the people owing to the dearness of those two articles.[39] Further, the price of rice was lowered and fixed by it at the following rates: for November *bund*[40] rice, 35 seers a rupee, and ordinary rice, 1 md. 10 seers a rupee.[41] The Council in Calcutta issued "public notices in all the market places that no person should exact higher prices than hereafter specified under a severe penalty." Thus in that year, rice was sold in Calcutta 1 md. 32 seers for 1 rupee 4 annas, grains, 1 md. a rupee, wheat, 1 md. 32 seers for 1 rupee 4 annas, flour, 1 md. 3 seers for 3 rupees, oil, 1 md. for 5 rupees. But in the next year, the prices of those articles became higher, rice being sold 1 md. 16 seers for 2 rupees 8 annas, grain, 1 md. 12 seers for 3 rupees 5 annas 6 pies, wheat, 1 md. 6 seers for 4 rupees 11 annas, flour, 1 md. for 8 rupees, oil, 1 md. for 11 rupees.[42] In 1754, fine rice was sold in Calcutta at 32½ seers a rupee, and coarse rice, 40 seers.[43] At Dacca, the price of all varieties of cloths rose in 1752 nearly 30 p.c. since 1738.[44]

[36] Para. 105.
[37] Letter to Court, 30th November, 1746, para. 9.
[38] Letter to Court, 10th January, 1748, para. 41.
[39] Consultations, 9th November, 1751. Mr. Holwell opposed the remission of duty on the ground that the money would not go to the poor, but to the dealers.
[40] The term, '*bund*' meant season. There were three '*bunds*' or seasons for spinning the cocoons. The November '*bund*' lasted from 1st October to the end of February; the March '*bund*' from 1st March to 30th June; the July '*bund*' from 1st July to 30th September. Murshidābād District Gazetteer, p. 13; Wilson, Vol. I, p. 397.
[41] Letter to Court, 2nd January, 1752.
[42] Consultations, 20th November, 1752.
[43] Consultations, 10th June, 1754.
[44] Consultations, 11th December, 1752.

On the 28th October of the same year, the English factors at Jugdeā informed the Council in Calcutta that due to the " very extraordinary rise (in the price) of cotton there the value of *baftās* was increased about 20 per cent. beyond their general price, since which cotton has had no fall and rise, which was then as usual at near two maunds for a rupee has rose to 25 seers so that the manufacture of a piece of Jugdea cloth from two annas has rose to five annas." [45] Thus the prices of the articles of common use went on increasing year by year till the sufferings of the people of Bengal knew no bounds as a result of the dreadful famine of 1770.

So far as the pre-Plassey period is concerned, four factors contributed to enhance the prices of the aforesaid articles : (*i*) the ravages and plunders of the Marāthas, (*ii*) the imposition of heavy duties in Calcutta on gross sales of the articles of prime necessity,[46] (*iii*) competition among the foreign merchants, and (*iv*) occasional natural calamities.[47]

(1) The Marātha invasions.

It is clear from copious references in the records of the Company that the Marātha incursions proved to be a source of immense misery to the people of Bengal causing the scarcity and dearness of all goods of ordinary use, like rice, oil, grains, and cloths, etc. In contemporary literature also we find a graphic description of the state of destitution to which the people were reduced as a result of the devastations carried on by the Marātha invaders. Gaṅgārāma writes : " The Bargīs (the Marāthas) plundered and murdered all whom they could lay hold of, with the result that no provision could be had ; rice, pulses (*dāl*) of all sorts, oil, ghee, flour, sugar, and salt, began to be sold at one seer a rupee. The misery of the people was so great as to beggar description. Numbers died of starvation ; *ganjā* (Indian hemp) and tobacco could

[45] Consultations, 13th November, 1752.
[46] Consultations, 9th November, 1751.
[47] Consultations, 20th November, 1752.

not be purchased; so also vegetables of all kinds."[48] We can very well note here the high prices of articles in Burdwān, as mentioned by Bhāratacandra in his description of the Mālīni's marketing for Sundara, to whom she rendered a detailed account of her purchases. She had purchased sweetmeats at the rate of 1 seer per 1 *kāhan* (*i.e.*, 1 rupee) ; ½ a seer of sūgar at 8 *paṇas* (annas); sandal wood, cloves, and nutmegs were very rare in the market ; ghee could be purchased with great difficulty after a search throughout the whole market ; a *pan* (20 *gaṇdās*) of betel-leaves had been purchased by her at 2 *paṇas* (2 annas); and eight bundles of firewood at 8 *paṇas* (annas). These rates were regarded as abnormal, and it was apprehended that these would rise higher day by day. This apprehension was not unfounded. Bhāratacandra completed his work in 1752, and it may be reasonably supposed that the high prices he described were due to the Marātha ravages in Burdwān, which city had been most severely affected by these.[49]

(2) Imposition of heavy duties.

The imposition of heavy duties on the articles of absolute necessity in Calcutta became also a source of great hardship to the people there. To cover the charges of these duties, the merchants raised the prices of articles, the burden of which fell on the ordinary consumers, who could not help purchasing victuals needed to keep body and soul together.

(3) Competition among the foreign merchants.

The competition among the foreign traders was again greatly instrumental in enhancing the prices of cotton and silk piece-goods. To collect their investments quickly, the European factors offered high prices for these to the businessmen and the weavers. The ordinary inhabitants of Bengal, who derived no benefit from these investments, had to suffer in the long run by paying high prices for their clothings.[50]

[48] Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa, lines 234-42.

[49] Firminger, *Fifth Report*, Vol. II, p. 216.

[50] For further details on this point, *vide ante*, p. 209.

(4) Natural calamities.

Natural calamities like floods and famines too had their share in increasing the prices of agricultural products. Govindarāma Mitra wrote to Mr. Drake, President of the Council in Calcutta, on the 20th November, 1752, that the rains of 1751 " having overflowed the country enough to drown whatever was planted in the low grounds " caused a ' great famine,' the like of which had not been known " for these sixty years past, for it rose to so dreadful a height " that many of the inhabitants " perished within the town with hunger, a truth well-known to every one," and provisions became excessively dear.

3. *Manufacturing Industries*

High quality of cotton and silk manufactures.

The economic importance of Bengal was due mainly to her extensive and varied manufactures of cotton and silk. She produced " cloth of all kinds, most beautiful muslins, silk, raw or worked." [51] Mr. Pattullo remarked in 1772 that the " demands for Bengal manufactures can never lessen, in regard that their quality is so peculiar to that country, that no nation on the globe can either equal or rival them." [52]

Agriculture and manufactures went hand in hand

Of course, agriculture formed an important occupation of the bulk of the people, but " the vacation from agriculture," remarks Mr. Orme, left " a much greater number of the inhabitants, than can be spared in others, at leisure to apply themselves to the loom, so that more cotton and silk are manufactured in Bengal than in thrice the same extent of country throughout the empire and consequently at much cheaper rates. The greater part of these manufactures and of the raw silk is exported ; and Europe receives the largest share ; the rest goes by land and sea to

[51] Hill, Vol. III, p. 216 ; *Hadīqat-ul-Aqālīm*, f. 113a.

[52] Pattullo, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

different parts of the Empire.'' [53] Thus, in Bengal agriculture and manufactures then went hand in hand.[54]

Localisation of silk and cotton manufactures.

The weaving manufactories '' were dispersed throughout the country,'' and each district was noted for the manufacture of a distinct type of cloth.[55] Some important towns, like Māldah, Hariāl, Serpur, Bālikushi, and Cogmāri, lying within the Zamindārī of Rāṇī Bhavānī of Nāṭore, were famous for manufacturing the following varieties of piecegoods —(*a*) '' for the Europe markets, *cossaes* (*khāsā* = fine cloths with diagonal patterns), *elatches*, *hummums*, *chowtahs* (or *chautāhis* = sheets folded four times),[56] *ootally*, *soosies* (*susi* or striped coarse fabrics), *seersuchers* (*śira-śekhara* = turbans) . . . ; (*b*) for the markets of Bussorah, Mocha, Jidda, Pegu, Acheen and Malaca, the different sorts of *cossaes*, *baftās* (a variety of calico), *sannose* (*san*, *i. e.*, flaxen or linen cloth), *mulmulls* (*malmals*, fine plain muslins), *tanjebs* (*tānjibs* = a kind of fine muslin), *kenchees*, etc.'' [57] The English East India Company collected *sannoes*, *malmals*, and *tanjebs* from the *aurungs* at Rungpur, Ghorāghāṭ,[58] Santose, and Buddal, all situated within the zamindārī of the Rājah of Santose.[59] Various species of piece-goods, like *dooreas* (striped cloths), *terrendams* (*terandam*), *cuttenies*, *soosies* (*susi*), *soot romals* (cotton handkerchiefs), *gurrahs*, *sestersoys*, *santon coupees*, *cherriderries*, *chilys*, *custas*, *doosoota* (*dusuti*—a variety of coarse cotton cloth), were manufactured in places like Burdwān,

[53] Orme, *Indostan*, Vol. II, p. 4.

[54] In modern times the main defect of Indian agriculture is just the absence of this employment of leisure to manufactures. Our agriculturists are occupied only for a part of the year, the rest of it being spent in idleness, intemperance, and unthrifty pursuits. Neither is there intensive scientific production engaging all the time and energies of the cultivators and their families for the whole year ; nor is the leisure of all, who live on the soil, devoted to textile industries like silk, cotton, linen, etc. From this standpoint, the '*carkā*' cult has in it an element of economic sanity.

[55] Birdwood, *Industrial Arts of India* (1880), p. 246. [56] Stavorinus, Vol. I, p. 474.

[57] Holwell, I. H. E., p. 193.

[58] The author of Hādīqat-ul-Aqālīm (f. 115b) refers to the manufacture of silk cloths at Ghorāghāṭ. [59] Holwell, I. H. E., p. 194.

Khirpāi,[60] Rādhanagore,[61] and Dewānganj, all belonging to the *zamindārī* of Rājah Tilakchānd of Burdwān, and a few inferior sorts of piece-goods, such as *seerbunds* (turbans), *golabunds* (neck-cloths), etc., were manufactured in some other places within its jurisdiction.[62] Silk and cotton cloths of a rather inferior quality were manufactured within the Bñākurā district, especially near Viṣṇupura.[63] Varieties of cotton cloths like *charconnaes* (*cārkhānā*, chequered muslins), *chucklaes* (*cāklās*, mixed silk and cotton), *penaiscoes*, *sursuchers*, *sāl-basta* (*śala-prastha*, cotton shawls or wrappers), etc., were manufactured at Midnāpur.[64] At Pipli were produced " manufactures of cotton in *sanis* (*sānus*), *casses* (*khesis*—wrappers or robes), *dimities*, *mulmulls* (*malmals*), *silk romals*, and *romals* of silk and cotton ; *gurrahs*, and *lungies* (head and waist cloths according to Birdwood)." [65] Coarse cotton handkerchiefs of blue colour were woven at Barānagore near Calcutta.[66] Certain places in Birbhum (the most important being Elāmbāzār) were also centres of cloth manufacture.[67] Nadiā and Murshidābād had a special reputation for the manufacture of various kinds of cotton and silk cloths. *Malmals*, *cossaes*, and other species of cloths were manufactured in places like Śāntipur, Burran, etc., for the markets of Europe.[68] The inhabitants of Cāssimbāzār, remarks Grose, were " remakably industrious, being employed in many useful manufactures. . . . They have also *taffaties* (*taffetās*), and the most beautiful cotton cloths of the country." [69] Stavorinus notes that " printed cottons, commonly called *chintzes* (*chits*) " were " not manufactured " in Bengal

[60] Seven miles east of Caṇḍrakoṇā in the Midnāpur district.

[61] In the Ghāṭal subdivision of the Midnāpur district.

[62] Holwell, I. H. E., pp. 195-96. [63] *Ibid*, p. 200.

[64] *Midnāpur District Records*, pp. 8-9.

[65] Abbe de Guoyn, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 496-97. Pipli in the Midnāpur district, 22 miles E.-N.-E. from Balasore.

[66] Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 519. [67] Holwell, I. H. E., pp. 201-02. [68] *Ibid*, p. 202.

[69] Vol. II, p. 240; Stavorinus (Vol. I. pp. 472-73) gives a similar description. Rennell also remarks : " Cossimbazar is the general market of Bengal silk and a great quantity of silk are manufactured here, which are circulated throughout great part of Asia ; of the unwrought silk, 3,00,000 or 4,00,000 lbs. weight is consumed in the European manufactories."

" except near Patna, in the province of Bahar (Bihār)," which were called " from the name of the place Patna *chintzes*." [70] As has already been noted,[71] Patna was an important centre of cloth manufacture. Cotton cloths, and carpets of various patterns, such as *satarañcī*, *dulicā*, and *gālicā*, were manufactured in different parts of Bihār.[71a]

Premier position of Dacca in the manufacture of fine *muslins* and cotton cloths of different species.

Of all the places in Bengal, Dacca occupied the premier position in the manufacture of fine *muslins* and cotton cloths of different species. She had " a vast trade in muslins," and manufactured " the most delicate ones, among those that are so much sought after in Europe." [72] Stavorinus remarked in 1770: " Muslins are sometimes wove (woven) so fine, that a piece of twenty yards in length, and longer, can be enclosed in a common pocket tobacco-box. The whole is done with a very trifling apparatus and Europeans are surprised to behold the perfection of manufacture, which is exemplified here in almost every handicraft, effected with so few and such imperfect tools." [73] In the letter from the Court of Directors to the Council in Calcutta, dated the 19th December, 1755, the following species of cloths are referred to as being manufactured at Dacca :—*sarbatis* (of colour semi-transparent like a glass of *sarbat*, fruit-juice), *malmals*, *alaballies*, *tanjeeb*, *terrindams*, *nainsooks* (' pleasure of the eyes '), *seerbandeonnaes* (turbans), *dooreas* (striped *muslins*), *jamdanies* (figured *muslins*), etc. In short, the looms at Dacca produced cloths of various degrees of quality, " ranging from the fine gossamer *muslin*, the attire of the inmates of the zananas of native princes, down to coarse thick wrapper worn by the poor ryot." [74]

[70] [71] Vol. I, p. 464.

[71] *Vide ante*, p. 189.

[71a] Vijayarāma, p. 106 and p. 168. As we find in the accounts of Buchanan, the cotton industry of Bihār did not die out in the early 19th century.

[72] Rennell, *Memoir of the Map of Indostan*, p. 61.

[73] Stavorinus, Vol. I, p. 413. " A common sized Dutch tobacco-box, such as they wear in the pocket, is about an inch deep." *Ibid*, p. 414, footnote.

[74] Taylor, p. 4.

Each variety of *muslin* was manufactured at Dacca by "fabrics of three or four assortments or degrees of quality," which were distinguished at the Company's factory by the "terms 'ordinary,' 'fine,' 'superfine,' and 'fine superfine.'"[75] The *muslins* were made plain, striped, chequered, figured, or coloured.[76] Further, Dacca was famous for embroidery and flowering-works on cloths. "From Dacca," wrote Abbe de Guyon in 1744, "come the best and finest Indian embroideries in gold, silver, or silk, and those embroidered neck-cloths and fine muslins which are seen in France." The Council in Calcutta often sent cloths to Dacca for embroidery and flowering-work.[77]

Dacca *muslins*—'fine,' 'superfine,' 'fine superfine,' plain, striped, chequered, figured or coloured.

Embroidery and flowering-works on cloths.

The large quantity of raw cotton, produced in the Dacca district[78] and in other parts of Bengal, was utilised for her manufactures. But so prodigious was the quantity of cloths manufactured, and so many looms were worked here, owing to the growth and continuance of an almost world-wide demand during the 17th and 18th centuries, that cotton had very often to be imported from Bombay and Surat. It is stated in Fort William Consultations of the 4th of December, 1752 :—"Agreed that we write by her (that is the ship *Hector*) to the gentlemen there (*i.e.*, Bombay), advise them of the disposition of our tonnage, and desire them to provide a cargo of the best Broach cotton for the Durrington that she may be returned to us early in the season....." Referring to Nāṭore, Holwell remarks :—"This

Cotton imported from outside Bengal for manufactures.

[75] *Ibid*, p. 42.

[76] *Ibid*, p. 41.

[77] *Vide ante*, p. 192.

[78] Right up to the beginning of the 20th century, the tradition amongst weaving families was that the cotton (tree cotton), needed for earlier Dacca *muslins*, was grown in the black soil of the district adjacent to the Dacca town in the north of it, of which 'Bowál' (Bhowál state) was a part; the black soil extends into North Bengal. It may be noted that this tree-cotton cultivation and manufacture of very fine counts of yarn, and of muslin from them, has been recently revived on a fair scale in Dacca.

country produces also *coposs*,[78a] or Bengal cotton, with which the above sortments of goods are in part manufactured, but the produce does not bear any proportion to the consumption, so that they are indebted to foreign markets for this article, and chiefly to the port of Surat.''[79] Stavorinus also notes that the Bengal looms necessitated the importation of cotton from outside the province, chiefly from Surat.[80]

Other industries besides silk and cotton; weaving of jute-cloths.

Besides the cotton and silk industries, there were some others in different parts of Bengal. Weaving of jute-cloths was prevalent in Calcutta and several other places. There are references to *gunnies* (jute-cloths) in the East India Company's investments from Bengal, and also in the list of articles sold in the Calcutta markets.[81] The manufacture of sugar, which was exported in large quantities to the different Asiatic countries,[82] was an important industry of the province.[83] Some other valuable articles of commerce, such as saltpetre, opium, and gumlac, were also manufactured abundantly in several places in Bihār.[84]

manufacture of sugar, saltpetre, opium, gumlac.

Excellent guns were manufactured in Bengal during this period. It is noted in Consultations, dated the 4th December, 1752, that gun-carriages were made both in Calcutta and Cāssimbāzār; in the former place these were made cheaper and better than in the latter. Monghyr was a famous centre of gun manufacture. Nawāb Alivardi used a gun manufactured here. Later on, Nawāb Mīr Kāsim

Manufacture of guns.

[78a] This is not quite true. The typical Bengal cotton is a species of tree-cotton; and *kāpās* is the plant-cotton general to many parts of India.

[79] I.H.E., p. 193.

[80] Vol. I, p. 478.

[81] The author of *Hadīqat-ul-Aqālim* refers to the manufacture of *ṭāṭs* (jute-carpets) at Ghorāghāṭ in North Bengal.

[82] *Vide ante*, p. 181.

[83] Letter to Court, 3rd January, 1748, para. 19; Stavorinus, Vol. I, p. 140.

[84] Stavorinus, Vol. I, pp. 474-78.

"collected (at Monghyr) as many guns and flint-muskets as he could with every necessary for war." [85] Boat-building industry formed the occupation of many carpenters,[86] who knew how to construct boats of various sizes and designs,[87] such as, *bajrā*,[88] *mayurpaṅkhī*,[89] *koshkhān*, *pālwārā*,[90] *seriṅgās*,[91] and *pāncways*.[92]

Boat-making.

These industries of Bengal, especially her famous cotton and silk industries, lost their old quality and importance, nay

[85] Hāji Mustafā, the translator of Siyar-ul-mutakherin, remarks :—"the European reader may possibly hear with surprise, that these firelocks manufactured at Mongher Monghyr) proved better than the best Tower-proofs, sent to India for the Company's use; and such was the opinion which the English officers gave then, when they made the comparison by order of the Council in Calcutta. Their flints were all of Rajmahal agates, and th ir metal more mellow. And even to-day, 1786, Colonel Martin, a Frenchman, who has greatly distinguished himself these twenty-two years in the English service, has at Lucknow a manufactory where he makes pistols and fuzils better, both as to lock and barrel, than the best arms that come from Europe. The comparison has been repeatedly made and Sir Elijah Impey, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Calcutta, carried to Europe one pair of these pistols." Siyar (Eng. trans.), Vol. II, p. 421, footnote. Northern and North-Eastern India had a tradition of efficient fire-arms manufacture since at least the 15th century, and it was not now for the first time that Indian-made fire-arms competed with the European-made; thus the Rumi artillery of Gujrāt was fully met by Sher Shāh's. Jaunpur in the first half of the 15th century specialised in fire-arms; and Assam has a tradition of an earlier manufacture of them.

[86] Rennell calculated the number of men engaged in constructing boats in Bengal proper (in 1788 A.D.) to be 30,000. *Vide ante*, p. 181.

[87] Vijayarāma, p. 9. We have a description of ship-building in Dvija Vaṁśīvadana's '*Manasāmaṅgala*,' a Bengali work of the 16th century. *Typical Selections*, Part I, p. 220.

[88] Such boats having various arrangements for comfort and pleasure were used by the Europeans, and the rich Indians, for travelling purposes. These were of different sizes, "from twenty-five to sixty feet in length and longer." Stavorinus, Vol. I, pp. 465-66.

[89] These were "very long and narrow, sometimes extending to upwards of an hundred feet in length, and not more than eight feet in breadth; ...these boats are very expensive owing to the beautiful decorations of painted and gilt ornaments which are highly varnished and exhibit a considerable degree of taste. *Ibid*, p. 468, footnote.

[90] *Ibid*, p. 467. *Pālwārās* = long, low, and narrow boats with sails fit for moving in shallow waters.

[91] *Rennell's Journals*, p. 68.

[92] Stavorinus, Vol. I, p. 468, footnote. *Pāncways* = *Pānsway*, boats for passengers or goods having a tiled roof of bamboo, mats, and thatch over a portion, usually rowed by either wo men or four, but carrying one mast and two sails.

almost died out in course of time, as a number of factors influenced the course of her history. The decline of Bengal's cotton and silk industries is indeed a pathetic story in the economic history of the province. It did not begin or end at any definite date, but was a long process continuing through many years. There is no doubt that, just as in other spheres of economic life, the influence of the Marātha invasions on the cotton and silk manufactures of Bengal was also highly disastrous. "Insecurity of person and property overwhelmed the merchants, and manufacture of the country was thereby greatly affected. Many of the inhabitants, weavers, and husbandmen fled, the Aurungs were in a great degree deserted, the lands untilled, and the wretched fugitives, who had escaped with nothing but their wives and children, and whatever they could carry in their hands, thought there was no safety for them until they arrived on the eastern shore (of the Padmā River)."[93] Even *gurrah* and similar other rough piece-goods were available with great difficulty.[94] The ruinous effect of the Marātha ravages was felt on the silk manufactures also; thus, we are told, that the "weavers and inhabitants fled, silk (was) often carried away wett (wet) and on the Reels, and piece-goods before (being) manufactured—the one wound off and the other finished in utmost hurry and confusion."[95] In 1751, a letter from the Cāssimbāzār factory to the Council in Calcutta stated: "The dearness of raw silk and silk piece-goods for some years past, they find, is owing to the Marattas (Marāthas) constantly enter-

Decline of cotton and silk industries,—a process continuing through many years,—

influence of the Marātha invasions,

93 Holwell, I. H. E., p. 123.

94 Letter to Court, 13th August, 1743, para. 10.
Ibid, 3rd February, 1743, para. 91.
Ibid, 4th February, 1746, paras. 16 to 34.
Ibid, 22nd February, 1746, para. 13.
Ibid, 30th November, 1746, paras. 7-9.

95 Letter to Court, 8th January, 1743, para 61.
Ibid, 30th November, 1746, para. 15.

ing Bengal, plundering and burning the people's houses and destroying the chief Aurungs, from whence the workmen have fled to distant places, and not to any mal-practice in the gentlemen there." In the same year, Mr. Kelsal wrote from Balarāmgarhy that the disturbances occasioned by the return of the Marāthas had prevented him from being able to purchase any goods, as most of the weavers had been obliged to abscond.[96]

Beginning of economic decline.

Taking into consideration all the aspects of the economic life of Bengal during the regime of Alivardi, it may be asserted that the economic degeneration of Western Bengal began since then. To hold that the oppressions of the Company's servants and *gomastās* were alone responsible for the decline of Bengal's industries, and that this began immediately after Plassey, is to look at the thing from only one side of it. Nobody will deny that their oppressive conduct after Plassey exercised a destructive influence on the industries of Bengal. But this also is to be admitted that there were already certain other cankers eating into Bengal's economic vitality. There was a great drain on her wealth, a deterioration in the quality and decrease in the quantity of her manufactures, and a considerable disturbance in agricultural pursuits resulting in the increase of the prices of the articles of common consumption, when the dreadful storm of the Marātha invasions had blown over her soil. What the Company's servants did was that they carried this bad state of things to a worse one by their unjust and cruel treatment of the native traders, manufacturers, and weavers. Mr. Bolts has rightly pointed out that the "ruinous practices" of the Company's servants and *gomastās* hastened the destruction of the manufactures "which had its first beginning in the irregularities of usurping Nabob (Nawābs) and the depredations of the Marahtahs (Marāthas)."[97] In short,

[96] Letter to Court, 4th February, 1751.

[97] Bolts, p. 206.

it may be said that the economic decline in the post-Plassey period was a natural sequel to the general political disorders, which had begun several years before 1757, but were certainly aggravated after that date, due largely to the intervention of the East India Company. Referring to the economic decline of Dacca, Rennell wrote in August, 1765 :—" We may easily account for its decline, by the continual wars which have of late years wasted the whole country (Bengal), and in the fomenting of which we have had too large a share." [98] Similar was the case in other parts of Bengal.

Economic decline—a sequel to the general political disorders.

[98] *An unpublished letter of Major James Rennell, Bengal, August 31, 1765*, printed in *Bengal : Past and Present, July-September, 1933.*

CHAPTER IX

The Social Aspect

Education

Life in every age and country varies greatly according to the education that men receive. In the time of which we are speaking, Bengal did not possess any organised system of University Education. Education depended entirely upon private initiative and private arrangements, made chiefly under the patronage of the local Rājahs and Zamindārs. Rāmeśvara wrote his Śivāyana in obedience to the orders of Rājah Yaśovanta of Burdwān ;[1] Anantarāma composed his Kriyāyogasāra under the orders of a rich man named Viśārada ; [2] Dvija Bhavānī compiled his Rāmāyaṇa in the court of a Rājah named Jayacandra (who had his capital at a certain place near Noākhālī), and got remuneration for it at the rate of Rs. 10 a day.[3] In order to encourage the cultivation of Sanskrit learning, Mahārājah Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā fixed a monthly allowance of Rs. 200 to be distributed as stipends among students coming from distant places to study in the *Catuspāṭhīs* (institution for higher Sanskrit education) of Nadiā.[4] It was under his patronage that Bhāratacandra wrote his ' Annadāmaṅgala ;' and Rāmaprasāda wrote his ' Kalīkīrtana ' under the

Education depended on private initiative and encouragement.

[1] " Yaśovanta sarvaguṇavanta tasya poṣya Rāmeśvara |
Tadāśraye kari ghara biracila śiva-saṅkīrtana ||

[2] The article " Baṅgabhāṣār upar Massalmāner Prabhāb," by Dr. D. C. Sen in the ' Vicitrā " of Māgh, 1335 B.S.

[3] Jayacandra narapati Rāma itihāsa ati
Jante se karila padabanda ||
Dvijavara Bhavānī āpana sakṣāt āni
Dine dine daśa mudrā dāna ||

Typical Selections, Part I, p. 583.

[4] Calcutta Review, 1872, pp. 103-04.

encouragement of Rājakiśora Mukhopādhyāya, a relative of Mahārājah Kṛṣṇacandra.

Higher Hindu education.

The Hindus received higher education in the *Catuspāṭḥīs*, which could be found in many important towns or villages, and where the medium of instruction was Sanskrit. These *Catuspāṭḥīs* were cosmopolitan in nature, welcoming teachers and scholars from different parts of India. Rāmaprasāda has left a description of a *Catuspāṭḥī* in Burdwān, where scholars from Drāviḍa, Utkala, Kāśī, and Tirhut were assembled.[5] He has also described how a Sanskrit scholar had to pass through different stages in his educational career. His education generally commenced with his fifth year with a special auspicious ceremony. He was at first taught to practise writing letters, an acquaintance with which entitled him to be introduced into the study of Grammar, and works like Bhaṭṭīkāvyam, Raghuvaṁśam, and Kumārasambhavam. After reading these, the young scholar had to devote himself to the study of Alaṅkāra. Logic formed the next subject of study in the curriculum, and that was followed by the more mature studies of the science of Astrology, and the different systems of Philosophy, including the Vedānta and the Vedic Prosody.[6]

Some famous writers of Vernacular literature flourished during the middle of the 18th century in Bengal and Orissā.[7] Among the Bengali writers of the age, Bhāratacandra, the court-poet of Mahārājah Kṛṣṇacandra, Rāmaprasada Sena, and Rāmeśvara, the author of Śivāyana, were the most prominent. Their works are read, even now, with pleasure and profit. Of the contemporary poets of Orissā, the names of Upendra Bhañja, Rāmadāsa, Kṛṣṇa Siṁha, Sadānanda Kavisuryabrahma, Abhimanyu Sāmanta Siṁha, and Brajanātha Barajena deserve

[5] Rāmaprasāda, p. 5, B.E.
[6] *Ibid*, pp. 50-51.
[7] D. C. Sen, *Baṅgabhāṣā o Sāhitya*, p. 492.

special mention. We have their writings in Oriyā Vernacular literature, but some of them possessed a fair knowledge of Sanskrit and other provincial vernaculars too, such as Marāthī, Hindi, and Bengali.[8]

Important centres of Learning.

Among the places where the study of Sanskrit and Vernalar literature was encouraged, Nadiā occupied the pre-eminent position. " In truth Nadiā was the focus of intellectual development, the land of the Naiyāyikas (logicians), who reasoned and argued on every conceivable topic, the abode of astronomers, whose *panjikās* and almanacs still regulate the festivals, and Pujās, and the daily domestic concerns of the Hindus."[9] Mahārājah Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā was a great patron of art and literature, and his court was adorned by a number of intellectual luminaries (about 80), proficient in the different branches of knowledge. The name of Bhāratacandra has been already mentioned. The Mahārājah himself had a fair knowledge of Sanskrit. He often took part in the discussion of the subtle problems of Logic with Harirāma Tarkasiddhānta, Kṛṣṇānanda Vācaspati, and Rāmagopāla Sārvabhauma, and talked over religious topics with Prāṇanātha Nyāyapañcānana, Gopāla Nyāyālaṅkāra, Rāmānanda Vācaspati, Rāmballabha Vidyāvāgīśa, and Vīreśvara Nyāyapañcānana. Vāṇeśvara was his poet-laureate, in collaboration with whom he tried to compose Sanskrit verses.[10] The celebrated astronomer, Rāmarudra Vidyānidhi, flourished in his court, and wrote his famous work ' *Sārasaṁgraha.*'[11]

Primary Education.

There was then nothing like the modern system of secondary education. But almost every village had a *pāṭhaśālā* (a primary school), where the students received elementary education in the three R's, reading, writing, arithmetic, and in some of the rudiments

[8] Majumdār, *Introduction to the Typical Selections from Oriyā Literature*, Vol. II, p. xxvi.

[9] Calcutta Review, 1872, p. 97.

[10] *Ksitīśavaṁśāvalīcarita*, p. 49.

[11] Vijayarāma, pp. 202-03.

of physical and natural sciences.[12] Śubhaṅkara, the renowned Hindu Arithmetician, flourished either towards the later part of the 17th or the earlier part of the 18th century, and it is quite probable that his system was taught in the *pāṭhaśālās* of Bengal throughout the 18th century.[13] Mr. W. Adam, who was commissioned by Lord William Bentinck in 1834-35 to make a survey of education in Bengal, writes in his second report :— "The only other written composition used in these schools and that only in the way of the rhyming arithmetical rules of Subhankara, a writer whose name is as familiar in Bengal as that of Cocker in England, without anyone knowing who or what he was, or when he lived. It may be inferred that he lived, or if not a real personage, that the rhymes bearing that name were composed before the establishment of British rule in this country, and during the existence of the Mussalman power, for they are full of Hindustani or Persian terms, and contain references to Muhammadan usages without the remotest allusion to English practices or modes of calculation."

Primary education was wide-spread in every sphere of society,[14] high or low, where people were gladly willing to enjoy its benefits and pleasures. One Madhusūdana, a barber by caste, who wrote his work 'Nala-Damayantī' in 1809 A.D., mentions that both his father and grandfather were famous writers.[15] The dates of Madhusūdana's father and grandfather are not known,

[12] Craufurd, Vol. II. pp. 12-13.

[13] Articles on "Śubhaṅkara" in "The Statesman," Sept. 9, 1928 and Oct. 2, 1928. I have collected two undated Bengali manuscripts of Śubhaṅkara's work ; and from handwriting it appears that these were written during the early part of the 19th century.

[14] *Baṅgabhāṣā o Sāhitya*, p. 397 and p. 450.

Dr. D. C. Sen refers to a few eighteenth century Bengali manuscripts, which were written by men belonging to the lower strata of the society,—(*i*) 'Naiṣadha,' composed by Lokanātha Datta, the manuscript being written by Mājhi Kāyet in 1768 A. D., (*ii*) Gaṅgādasa Sena's 'Devayāṇī Upākhyāna,' written by Rāmanārāyaṇa Gopa in 1778 A. D., (*iii*) 'Hari vaṁśa,' translated by Dvija Bhavānanda, but written by Bhāgyamanta Dhupi in 1783 A.D., (*iv*) 'Kriyāyogasāra,' translated from a portion of the Padmapurāṇa, by Anantarāma Śarmā, but written by Rāghavendra Rāja in 1731 A.D.

[15] *Baṅgabhāṣā o Sāhitya*, p. 397.

but when Madhusūdana could write in 1809 A.D., it may be that his grandfather had flourished towards the middle of the 18th century. There were other channels, besides schools, through which also the masses could receive a certain amount of enlightenment. Religious songs, *saṅkīrtanas*, popular tales, and comic ballads were widely current in the society and always served to imbue the minds of all classes of people with certain amount of ethical, aesthetic, and intellectual tastes. These could be recited by men belonging even to the lowest stratum of society with such an art as made it difficult to discriminate[16] between a man of letters and an illiterate man. It may be of interest to note that these men sought knowledge for honest pleasure, and the elevation of the spiritual self, and did not take to any sevice by giving up their respective professions. Madhusūdana's grandfather did not give up his profession when he became a famous poet, and his literary grandson continued to be a barber.

Persian Education.

Education in Persian was apparently in a flourishing condition. For the Muhammadans this was an important medium through which they could receive higher education, and the Hindus as well sought to acquire some knowledge of it. As the language of the rulers, Persian had become the official language of the day, and many of the notable Hindus had to learn it as a matter of necessity to qualify themselves for posts under the Nawāb's Government and the Company.[17] Thus the poet Rāmaprasāda Sena, formerly a clerk under the Company, mastered Persian within a short time through the help of a Maulavī. The chapter on "*Mādhava Bhāṭ's Journey to Kāñcīpura*" in his '*Vidyāsundara*' gives us some idea of his proficiency in Persian and Urdu.[18] Such was the

Knowledge of Persian, a practical necessity for the Hindus of those days.

16 "Even those who watch the cows think of *saṅkirtana*; it is very difficult to distinguish between a paṇḍit and a man of lower class (*cāṣā*)." Rāmaprasāda, p. 5, B. E.

17 Introduction to the works of Rāmaprasāda Sena (B. E.), *Navyabhārata*, Agrahāyaṇa, 1293 B.S.

18 Rāmaprasāda, p. 3 (B. E.).

case with Bhāratacandra also.[19] At the age of fourteen, when he had acquired a good knowledge of Sanskrit and had married a girl of an Ācārya family of the village Sāradā near Tājpur in the Maṇḍalghāṭ *paraganā*, his elder brothers took him to task for his wholesale devotion to the study of Sanskrit, to the exclusion of Persian, the knowledge of which might stand him in good stead in his practical life. This rebuke came to him as a blessing in disguise, as he soon went to the house of Rāmacandra Munsī, a Hindu Kāyastha of Devānandapura t o the west of Vāñśberiā in the Hughli district, and very soon acquired a fair knowledge of Persian. It is quite possible that there were others also belonging to the Hindu community in the different villages of Bengal, who had learnt Persian like Rāmacandra Munsī. Narasiṁha Vasu, the author of Dharmamaṅgala, a Bengali work of the early 18th century, possessed a considerable knowledge of Persian,[20] and Rājah Navakṛṣṇa of Sobhābāzār was Persian tutor to Warren Hastings in 1750 A.D.[21] Alivardi's Hindu officers could not have worked satisfactorily in the different departments of the state, unless they had some knowledge of Persian. One of them, Kyretchānd, had sufficient knowledge of Persian grammar and could write Persian correctly and elegantly. As has already been noted, Rājah Rāmnārāin was a famous Persian poet.[22]

The Nawābs and many of the Muhammadan grandees, were patrons of Persian language and literature. A batch of eminent scholars flourished in Alivardi's court.[23] Azimābād (Patna) was

19 "Yadi kincit tvam vadasi darajāne mana āyātkhosi |
Āmāra hṛdaye vase prema kara khosa hoyke ||"
Bhāratacandra, p. 181, B. E. These two lines from part of a poem composed by Bhāratacandra in a language mixed of Bengali, Sanskrit, Persian, and Hindi.

20 *Typical Selections*, Part I, p. 456.

21 Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1843, p. 220. *Cf.* "Srī Srī Mahārājah Bhupa Bahādura vālya kāla atita haiā kisora kāl haiāi pārsī bangālāte sacchande ār khoskhat akṣar haila..." Extract from *Rājopākhyāna*, by Jayanātha Ghoṣa, *Typical Selections*, Part II, p. 1677.

22 *Vide ante*, p. 166.

23 Siyar, Vol. II, pp. 611-13. *Vide ante*, p. 174. Compare a similar account of the court of Nawāb Sardar Jang in contemporary Oudh, given in Siyar.

an important centre of Persian education. Ghulām Husain writes :—" There were in those times at Azimābād a number of persons, who loved science and learning, and devoted themselves to teaching and being taught; and I remember to have seen in that city and its environs nine or ten professors of repute and three or four hundred students and disciples, from which it may be conjectured that there were many (Persian) scholars also in other important towns. Amongst those that flourished in the town of Bihār, the Qāzī Ghulām Muzaffar, better known under the title of Muzaffar 'Ālī, was appointed by Alivardi to the office of the Supreme Judge of Murshidābād." [24] A number of learned and meritorius men then came to Hindustān from Irān and settled particularly in the Bihār town and at Azimābād.[25] The more important ones among them were (1) Al Muhammad ul Madu Ba 'Ālī, the great poet Hazin, (2) Shaikh Muhammad Husain, (3) Sayyid Mahammad 'Ālī, and (4) Hājī Badiuddīn.[26]

Patronage of the Nawāb and the grandees for Persian education.

Patna, an important centre of Persian education.

Advent of learned men to Patna from Irān.

The higher curriculum of Persian education included chiefly the study of Persian literature, Islamic theology, medical science, and astrology. Institutions for such education were not wanting, Professors of Arabic and Persian were maintained in mosques or *imāmbārahs*, and *maktābs* sprang up wherever Mussalmans predominated in number.[27]

Curriculum and institutions for Persian education.

The people of Bengal were not then generally so eager to learn any European language. Referring to them, Edward Ives

24 Siyar, Vol. II, p. 614.

25 *Ibid*, pp. 614-20. A detailed account of each of these men is available in these pages.

26 *Ibid*, p. 615.

27 Education Commission Report of the Bengal Provincial Committee, paragraphs 183-84. While describing the state of indigenous education in Bihār during the first quarter of the 19th century, Hamilton Buchanan mentions in his journals and reports a large number of Arabic and Persian schools in different parts of the province.

writes : " Although there are many schools for the education of children, yet they seldom learn more than their mother tongue. It is indeed surprising considering the great number of English that are settled amongst them and with whom they have continual dealings that they should not be able in common to speak our language so well as the people near the seaports of Madagascar." [28] But there were at least a few, who learnt the English language, more or less, through some means or other. After reading Sanskrit and Persian, Rāmanidhi (popularly known as Nidhu Bābu) read English with a Christian missionary.[29] Some of the Christian missionaries were then trying to teach English to the (native) ' charity boys.' In 1754, one missionary named Mr. Mapleloft petitioned to the Council in Calcutta :—" We flatter ourselves this application will not appear unreasonable to you as it must be very evident that children well-educated and instructed in the English language and accounts, may hereafter be of great service not only to the Gentlemen of that place, but also to the Honourable Company." [30] It is possible that Itsāmuddīn, the author of Sagarfnāmah,[31] who was sent with a letter of representation to George III in England by Emperor Shāh 'Ālam II, after the Diwānī, *i.e.*, in the year 1766, knew English ; otherwise, he would not have ventured to undertake such a task.

No widespread study of any European language.

Female education was not unknown to the age. Vidyā, the heroine of Bhāratacandra's as well as Rāmaprasāda's Vidyāsundara, has been pictured as a woman possessed of good education.[32] Her education, as it has beeen said, was so high as to

Female Education.

[28] Edward Ives' *Voyage*, p. 29.
[29] *Nārāyaṇa*, Jaiṣṭha, 1323 B. S., p. 739.
[30] Long, pp. 48-49.
[31] I have consulted the Kujbuā library copy.
[32] Rāmaprasāda Sena, p. 3 (B.E.).

enable her to proclaim that she would marry only him who could vanquish her in literary debates.[33] Rāṇī Bhavāṇī of Nāṭore was, like her contemporary Ahalyā Bāi of Indore, a well-educated lady.[34] The wife of Jaśovanta Rāya, a Brāhmaṇ of Naśīpur, understood Bengali accounts, and the wives of Rājah Navakṛṣṇa were famed for being able to read.[35] A daughter of Rasorāja, the famous buffon at the court of Mahārājah Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā, was well conversant with the literature of her people.[36] Many female mendicants among the Vairāginīs and Sannyāsinīs had some knowledge of Sanskrit, and still greater number were conversant with the popular poetry in the dialects of the country.[37] Muhammadan women in high circles were also given some amount of education.[38]

Thus, we see plainly enough that the women of the age were not universally steeped in the darkness of ignorance. In the distant corners of the villages there flourished female poets and writers, who can be regarded as worthy predecessors of their more educated sisters of the present day. The Auxiliary Committee of the Indian Satutory Commission aptly remarked in 1929 that " there is nothing inherent either in the Hindu or in the Muslim religion which militates against the education of women. In fact, there were in India even in early days many examples of women possessing wide knowledge, particularly of sacred and classical literature." It is not certain if there were any special institutions or arrangements for the education of the girls, or whether they received their education in the same institutions with the boys.[39] Most probably the education of

33 Bhāratacandra, p. 63 (B.E.).

34 Calcutta Review, 1872.

35 Ward, *History of the Hindoos*, Vol. I, p. 399.

36 Sītānāth Tattabhuṣan, *Social Reform in Bengal*, p. 38.

37 Ward, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 399.

38 Siyar (Eng. Trans.), Vol. II, p. 242.

39 We find an instance of a girl reading in the same institution with the boys during the early 19th century. *Autobiography of Rāsasundarī* in D. C. Sen's *Typical Selections*, Part II, p. 1768.

girls was more a matter of private than public concern, as the age required them to be "ministering angels" rather than fair statesmen or orators, though we shall see hereafter that some of them were concerned in matters of state as well.

Position of Women

Women were wholly subject to the will of their masters (husbands),[40] and could not do anything without their consent. They were kept confined within the four walls of their houses, and were not allowed to expose themselves publicly. Verelst writes :—

Dependence of Women.

"the confinement of women is a law that cannot be changed. Throughout India the practice most certainly prevails, and is closely connected with the manner and religion of the people. The Hindu not less than the Mahomedan dreads the exposal of his women as the worst dishonour."[41] Appearance of women in public with bare faces or heads was highly condemned, and they were always expected to be modest and gentle in their habits and demeanour. For a chaste woman, her husband was the only source of support and happiness in this world,[42] and devoid of her husband's protection, she had no other place where she could lead her life peacefully and happily, not even in her paternal home.[43] She could not go to her father's house without the husband's consent. In a contemporary Bengali manuscript, named '*Bhavāñīmaṅgala*,' by Gaṅgānārāyaṇa, the poet indirectly hints at this feature of the social life of the day. We find there that Girirāja expressed a keen desire to take Gaurī to his house and said, "My daughter, do what you now

[40] Verelst, p. 25. "The life of a woman is not good; she is always dependent and has to bear the burden of others." Bhāratacandra, p. 222.

[41] Verelst, p. 138; Grose, Vol. I, p. 240. "How is it that in our society a young woman is not veiled ?" Rāmaprasāda, p. 115 (B.E.).

[42] Bhāratacandra, p. 229.

[43] "You would go to your father's house in the hope of having your mother's love, but your sister-in-law will always want to drive you away; the father does not make any enquiries, nor does the mother speak sweetly, if they find (their daughter) unfortunate in her marital relations."—'*Jayāra Upadeśa*' in Bhāratacandra, p. 26 (B.E.).

think proper." At this Gaurī replied that she could not go without Śiva's consent. Quite evidently, Śiva, Gaurī, Girirāja and Menakā, of Bengali religious poetry of the 18th century, are reflections of the average sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, and parents-in-law of actual contemporary Bengali society.

Women occasionally took part in political and administrative affairs.

Sometimes, however, the women could take serious and prominent parts in politics, and in general administration of the estates and affairs entrusted to their care. Rāṇī Bhavāṇī,[44] whose name has become a byword for charity and generosity, was the most prominent figure among this class of women. As a Zamindar she was very strong and assertive, and was known for her impartial administration of justice. Her endeavours for the spread of education, love for the country, skill in administration, piety, and affection for the poor, have enshrined her name in the hearts of her countrymen. The temples, that were built under her care and patronage, have elicited admiration from foreign travellers.[45] Tradition says that once Narendranārāyaṇa Rāya, father of the poet Bhāratacandra, used some abusive terms about Mahārāṇī Viṣṇukumārī, mother of Mahārājah Kīrticandra of Burdwān, in connection with a dispute over a plot of land. Highly incensed at this, the Mahārāṇī ordered two of her Rājput generals, named Ālamacandra and Kṣemacandra, either to kill the infant son of Narendranārāyaṇa or to occupy Bhūrsuṭ for her during that night. In obedience to her commands, the generals occupied the fort of Bhavāṇīpura as well as the fort of Pñeḍo (the abode of Narendranārāyaṇa). The next morning, Viṣṇukumārī personally proceeded to the fort of

44 "Rāṇī Bhavāṇī is a heroine among the Bengalees." H. Beveridge in C. R., 1892, p. 209. Compare Ahalyā Bāi in contemporary Indore.

45 "Baranagar (near Murshidābād) is famous as the place where Rāṇī Bhavāṇī spent the last years of her life, and where she died. She built some remarkable temples here. In size or shape they are ordinary enough, but two of them are richly ornamented with terra-cotta tiles, each containing figures of Hindu gods very excellently modelled, and in perfect preservation." H. Beveridge in C. R.

Pñeḍo, and after showing proper respect to the women and the priests and making suitable arrangements for the worship of the local deity, returned to Burdwān.[46] We meet with a similar picture of a lady-Zamindar elsewhere. Devi Siṁha, a zamindār in a part of the Rungpur district, had become so oppressive that the other Zamindars and his own ryots revolted against her. The leader of this revolt, as a poet-chronicler says, was a spirited and tactful woman-zamindār of the name of Jayadurgā Caudhurāṇī.[47] Similar instances were to be found also amongst Muhammadan women. Nawāb Shujāuddīn's Begam, Zebunnisā, occasionally helped her husband in the administration of his state-affairs. Dardānah Begam, wife of Murshid Qulī, Governor of Orissā, exhorted her husband to fight against Alivardi. Alivardi's Begam occasionally appeared on the battle-field with her husband, and also "played the role of a supreme political officer in Bengal whilst her husband fought the battles with the Maharattas" (Marāthas).[48] She encouraged her husband, when the latter gave way to despair, owing to the treachery of his Afghān generals, and the death of Hājī Ahmad and Zainuddīn.[48a] Holwell writes about her: "A woman whose wisdom, magnanimity, benevolence, and every amiable quality, reflected high honour on her sex and stations. She much influenced the usurper's (Alivardi's) Councils, and was consulted by him in every material movement in the state except when san-

[46] Introduction to Bhāratacandra's Granthāvalī, published by the New Victoria Press.

[47] D. C. Sen, *Typical Selections*, Part II, pp. 1413-18. We can compare with this the character of Devī Caudhurāṇī, who was the leader of a native revolt against the Company in the days of Warren Hastings. Hastings had at first thought too lightly of her movements, but when her soldiers attacked the house of a rich merchant in Calcutta, he was awakened to the seriousness of the rising and took proper measures for its suppression. The Bengali magazine '*Sāhitya*' of the month of Jaiṣṭha, 1305 B.S.

[48] Riyāz, p. 329, footnote 1; Stewart, p. 511. Farrukhsiyar's mother played an important part in securing the throne for her son (Irvine, *Later Mughals*, Vol. II, p. 263); and Rahimunnisā, known to her contemporaries as Koki Jiu, effectually interfered in public affairs during the reign of Muhammad Shāh (*ibid*).

[48a] *Vide ante*, p. 97.

guinary and treacherous measures were judged necessary, which he knew, she would oppose as she ever condemned them when perpetrated ****, predicting always that such politics would end in the ruin of his family."[49] Thus, in the "world's broad field" and "in the bivouac of life," the women of the age could sometimes stand side by side with men. They were not only angels of service at home but also active participators in the conflicts abroad.

Position of the mistress of a household.

In family life, the mistress of the household occupied a very important position. A good and pious mistress served as a ministering angel to her family, and a bad and impious one was like an evil star settled on its fortunes. A bad wife was looked upon as a cause of unhappiness to her husband.[50] An ideal ('*uttamā*') wife was always solicitous for her husband's welfare, though the latter might commit something wrong; next to her ('*madhyamā*') in merit was she, who returned good for good, and evil for evil, to her husband; but one who returned evil for good done by her husband was a bad wife ('*adhamā*'). A wife, who became angry with her husband without rhyme or reason, was nick-named '*Caṇḍī Nāyikā*' (*Lady Fury*).[51]

A woman in a Hindu joint family.

The position of a wife in a Hindu joint-family was inter-related with the interests and comforts of its other members. She had her duties not only to her husband but also to each and every member of her family. In this connection, we can very well compare the instructions that Vidyā, the heroine of Rāma-prasāda's *Vidyāsundara*, received from her mother, at the time of her going to her father-in-law's house for the first time: "My darling! as it is a custom, so I speak a few words unto you. Try to be obedient to the superiors of your family, and serve them

49 I. H. E., pp. 170-71.

50 "He, whose wife is wicked, is dead even in his life-time; he should retire to the forest." —Bhāratcandra, p. 25 (B.E.).

51 *Ibid*, p. 169 (B.E.).

to their satisfaction. She, who had kindness for her fellow-beings, becomes the mistress of the house." [52]

Early experience of the girls.

It would not be proper to suppose that the girls, after their marriage at a comparatively early age, were thrust amidst the severe duties of a practical life without previous experience. The innocent amusements and diversions of their early days, in the course of which they very often created a mimic world of their own, served to sow in their minds the seeds of the higher duties of a household life. We find a vivid picture of this 'play-way' in the writings of a contemporary poet :—" Princess Umā was in the company of her playmates of equal age, such as Jaśodā, Rohiṇī, Citralekhā and others. With a cheerful heart, she took her seat in the midst of all, and made a temple of clay under a '*Vakula*' tree. Along with Jayā and Haimavatī, who had made ovens with red earthen pots and red fuel, she was busy cooking nicely. After preparing rice of dust Gaurī served it to all. They did not really eat anything, but only touched their mouths with their hands. They finished washing their mouths without water, and asked for betels. She prepared beds of Kadamba leaves, and they lay on them amidst great merriment, a pair of friends occupying each bed...Some of them swept the ground and besmeared it with water and cow-dung, as was the practice in the family of a householder." [53] The last sentence of this passage is significant, and the accuracy of the description in the whole of it shows that this picture was faithfully drawn from the family life of contemporary society.

Gentle manners of Hindu women.

In general, the Hindu women were " gentle in their manners," and had " something soft and musical in their voice." [54] Some of them cultivated the art of music, played on musical instruments, and sang in tune with these.[55]

52 Rāmaprasāda, p. 49 (B.E.).

53 *Dharmamaṅgala*, by Sahadeva Cakravarti ; *Typical Selections*, Part I, p. 482.

54 Craufurd, Vol. II, p. 50.

55 *Ibid*, p. 39; Bhāratacandra, p. 79 and p. 167 ; *Typical Selections*, Part II, p. 1872.

Women engaged in spinning and weaving.

Generally, after dinner female members of some neighbouring families assembled together, and spent some time in frank and merry gossips, and in reading scriptures or books of stories and fables. Some of them engaged themselves in spinning yarn and twist by means of "*tākus*" or "*carkās*," which they afterwards sold to the weavers. This helped many of the indigent families in defraying a part of their family expenses. Though the higher middle classes regarded this home industry as humiliating to their rank, their womenfolk spun a considerable amount of twist and yarn under the pretence of preparing their own clothes or sacred threads, and could earn a small sum of money by selling these through the agency of other women of lower social ranks.[56] Thus the spinning industry was more in vogue in the cottages of the poor, the needy, and the infirm,[57] than in the comparatively thriving homesteads of the higher middle classes, or the establishments of the rich.

Satī.

Satī, or the practice of Hindu women burning themselves on the funeral pyres of their husbands, or rarely burying themselves with their husbands, was an ancient rite among the Hindus, referred to in Vedic literature and Puranic tradition.[58] Its continuance, with more or less emphasis, is attested to by a number of references in the literature and relics of subsequent historical times. In spite of Akbar's and Jahāngīr's attempts to suppress or to regulate the rite, it continued to prevail as before, and we find several references to it in the accounts of some European writers of the 18th century like Ives, Scrafton, Bolts, Grose,

56 *Kṣitīśavaṁśāvalīcarita*, p. 37.

57 "That *** sleep influenced the eyes of the old woman Jayā, who was sipnning thread in the late hours of the night." *Dharmaṅgala*, by Narasiṁha Vasu, *Typical Selections*, Part I, p. 473.

58 I have dicussed the antiquity, history, and abolition of the Satī rite in another thesis of mine, entitled 'Education and Social Amelioration of Women in Pre-Mutiny India,' published by the Patna Law Press, Patna.

Stavorinus, and Craufurd, as also in 18th century Bengali literature.[59]

The Brāhmaṇ priests played a prominent part in Satī sacrifices.[60] A woman, when about to burn herself as a Satī, was not allowed to be touched and thus defiled by a non-Hindu. The Dutch Director, Sichterman (1744 A. D.), " was obliged to pay twenty-five thousand rupees for an imprudence of this kind." [61] The Satīs exhibited extraordinary courage and fortitude in offering themselves up for such ghastly sacrifices, being unperturbed in the least by considerations of worldly enjoyments. Mr. Bolts remarks : " Even their very women, who live sequestered from the world, and of course are inexperienced in such difficulties and misfortunes as serve to fortify the mind and heart, or such distress as will render life irksome or impel to desperation, often manifest such fortitude as amazes Europeans but to hear of, in the horrid deaths which they voluntarily brave, of burning alive with the dead bodies of their husbands in funeral pyres." [62]

The Satī sacrifices, so shocking to humanity, often demonstrated the strength of conjugal fidelity. Scrafton writes : " Many authors ascribe this (Satī) to have been instituted to prevent their (dead husbands') wives poisoning them; but I am well persuaded that they often submit to it by a nice sense of honour and conjugal affection." [63] Mr. Holwell refers to the case of the wife of one Rāmchānd Paṇḍit, a Marātha settler at Cāssimbāzār, who died on the 4th of Februrry, 1743. The woman was of about seventeen years and belonged to a rich family. All the merchants of Cāssimbāzār and her relatives " left no arguments unessayed to dissuade her from it. But she

59 " A woman desires to get her husband's body. It is proved by the fact that she burns herself with her dead husband." Bhāratacaudra, p. 92, B. E.

(b) " I shall presently die with you by burning the pyre and entering into it." Rāmaprasāda, p. 65. B. E.

60 Ives' *Voyage*, p. 23.

61 Stavorinus, Vol. I, pp. 448-49.

62 *Considerations*, p. 7.

63 Scrafton, pp. 110-11.

listened to none, and her friends finding her thus peremptory and resolved, were obliged at last to assent." She only waited till the Faujdār's permission for her burning had been received. The Dutch traveller, Stavorinus, who witnessed a Satī case at Chinsurā on the 25th November, 1770, writes that the woman "underwent everything with the greatest intrepidity, and her countenance seemed at times to be animated with pleasure, even at the moment when she was ascending the fatal pile." [64] He paid particular "attention to her in order to discover whether any convulsive motion agitated her feet, but they remained immovable in the midst of conflagration." Compulsion might have been sometimes used, but that was, remarks the same writer, "seldom necessary as they possess sufficient enthusiasm willingly to devote themselves to this horrible death." He also refers to the case of the wife of a rich Bengali broker of the Dutch East India Company gladly offering herself as a Satī, though her husband had been a veritable debauchee and left her company. She refused to obey the instructions of her friends and relatives, who tried to dissuade her from the act on the ground that her husband "had used her so ill in his lifetime." [65] Thus, it would be wrong to suppose that in all cases women sacrificed themselves under the pressure of social conventions and the expostulations of the priests and their relatives.

Satī was forbidden under certain circumstances. The burning of a pregnant woman was not allowed by the Śāstras ; [66] and when the husband died at a distance from his wife, she could not burn herself, unless she could procure her husband's girdle and turban to be placed on the funeral pyre. [67] Scrafton remarks that "the practice (of Satī) was far from common, and was only complied with by those of illustrious families." [68] Stavorinus

[64] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 448.

[65] The pile of sandalwood that had been erected for this body was calculated to be worth £ 633 sterling.

[66] "Nahe śāstra saṁmatā sasatvā sahamṛtā." Rāmaprasāda, p. 33, B. E.

[67] Craufurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 16.

[68] Scrafton, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

also notes that it was prevalent among "some castes."[69] Sometimes, temples were erected on the spot where one of those sacrifices had been performed. Craufurd writes that he saw one of those places, "where the spot on which the funeral pile had been erected was enclosed and covered with bamboos, formed into a kind of bower planted with flowering creeper. The inside was set round with flowers, and at one end there was an image."[70]

Attempts for two social reforms,—abolition of the rigours of *ekādaśībrata* and introduction of widow-remarriage.

It would be interesting to note that attempts were made during the mid-eighteenth century to reform two social customs concerning widows. Firstly Rāṇī Bhavāṇī, being much pained at her daughter's widowhood, tried to remove the rigours of the '*ekādaśībrata*' (fasting of widows on the eleventh day of the moon);[71] but she could not succeed owing to the opposition of most of the *paṇḍits* of Bengal. Secondly, Rājah Rājaballabha of Vikrampur (in the district of Dacca), whose daughter had become a widow at an early age, tried in 1756 to introduce widow-remarriage.[72] His proposal received the sanction of many *paṇḍits*; but it failed ultimately as Rājah Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā managed to turn the opinion of the *paṇḍits* of his court against it.

Early marriage.

Marriages of boys and girls were celebrated in their early ages.[73] Generally, the marriage of a girl in an advanced age was not permitted by the laws of the society, and the parents of such a girl incurred a universal odium.[74] They even apprehended an eternal damnation for thus

69 *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 441.

70 *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 32-33.

71 '*Sāhitya*,' Fālgun, 1304 B. S.

72 C. R., 1855. *The Bengal Spectator*, July, 1842, p. 51.

73 Stavorinus, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 441.

74 (*a*) "Alas, what should I say! such a grown-up but unmarried girl is like burning fire. You should arrange for her marriage and thus preserve the sanctity of religion." Bhāratacandra, p. 90 B. E.

(*b*) "Finding such a girl unmarried, others will, out of shame, cut their tongue with their own teeth." Rāmaprasāda, p. 23 B. E.

violating the sacred laws of religion, which enjoined the marriage of a girl before the age of puberty. This was so striking a feature of the Hindu social life of that time, that it did not fail to attract the notice of some European writers. Mr. Scrafton observes: "They are married in their infancy, and consummate at 14 on the male side, and 10 or 11 on the female, and it is common to see a woman of 12 with a child in her arms. Though barren women are rare among them, yet they bear but few children, for at 18 their beauty is on the decline, and at 25 they are strongly marked with age."[75] Mr. Craufurd, writing about twenty-five years later, made almost a similar remark: "The Hindus are so scrupulous with respect to the virginity of their brides, that they marry extremely young."[76] These observations are well corroborated by the evidence of contemporary literature.[77]

Girls had no voice in the choice of their husbands.

The girls had no voice in the choice of their husbands, and their opinions were not at all considered necessary. Sometimes, an accomplished and well-read girl was married to a husband who was deaf and of a black complexion,[78] a girl of fair beauty was married to a blind man[79] prone to quarrelling and creating uneasiness, a young girl was married to an old man,[80] a girl of tender and slim body was matched with a corpulent man,[81] and again, sometimes, a boy of 12 or 13 was coupled with a girl of full-blown youth.[82]

75 Scrafton, pp. 10-11. 76 *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 2.

77 "Gradually he attained his 13th year and his parents were overpowered with joy. They married him to a daughter of a king, belonging to the same class. She was a blessed girl, possessed of beauty and qualities." Rāmaprasāda, p. 15, B. E.

78 "One woman said, My friend! let me tell you about my misfortune. I have been married to a husband, who is deaf and of black complexion. All my fine and aesthetic knowledge of poetry, learnt with much hope, have been spoiled by being wedded to this deaf fellow." Bhāratacandra, p. 97, B. E.

79 "My unfortunate and blind husband is expert only in quarrelling: I have lost my fair complexion and have turned black by always pondering over my fate." *Ibid.*

80 "My husband is corpulent and top-bellied." *Ibid.*

81 "I am a young girl, while my husband is an old man." *Ibid.*

82 "I am a kulīn's daughter," said another woman, "my youth has passed away in expectation of a bridegroom. Though I have been married after a long time, yet in age I shall be like an elder sister to my husband." *Ibid*, p. 99.

The girls had no liberty to protest, in words or deeds, against the inexorable laws of society, which subjected them to such misfortunes. With conscience and feelings deeply wounded, they could only weep and occassionally murmur among themselves.

Evils of Kulinism :

There is no doubt that these evils were due, more or less, to the triumphant kulīnism of the age. Among the Brāhmaṇs, the Mukhopādhāyas, the Caṭṭopādhāyas, and the Vandyopādhāyas occupied, in order, the chief places in the scale of kulīnism.[83] Among the Kāyasthas also, such places were occupied by the Ghoṣa, Vasu, and Mitra families.[84] So narrow and rigid were the customs of those *kulīns*, that one belonging to an inferior status was held in contempt by them and could not even sit by their side.[85] They used their pedigrees as a means of making or bettering their fortune, and felt no scruple in relaxing the rigidity of their rules in the case of a wealthy man, though the latter might be of an inferior descent.[86] Marriage in *kulīn* families could never be celebrated peacefully. Disputes and quarrels were sure to arise on some questions or other.[87]

quarrels.

83 (*a*) " My father, born in a Mukhopādhāya family, belongs to the chief ' *gotra* ' and my husband, known as belonging to a Vandopādhāya family, is a great *kulīn*." Bhāratacandra, p. 61, B.E.

(*b*) " Anandīrām Mukhārji, the ocean of *kula* " (*i.e.*, belongs to a very noble family). *Ibid*, p. 6, B.E.

(*c*) " Many Mukhopādhāyas, Caṭṭopādhāyas, and *Bāṅāḍari* Brāhmāṇs went along with him." Tīrthamaṅgala by Vijayarāma. The poet describes the Bāṅāḍarīs as *kulīns*, but a Bāṅāḍari Brāhmāṇ was considered to have lost his family honour (*kula*). Bhāratacandra does not refer to the Bāṅāḍarīs as kulīns :—" Bāṅāḍarī Gokula Kṛpārāma Dayārāma." *Op. cit.*, p. 6, B.E.

84 " He married three daughters, blessed with beauty and virtue, in three chief *kulīn* families, Ghoṣa, Vasu, and Mitra." Bhāratacandra, p. 57, B.E.

85 " My husband is abused as a *sāhāttare* (belong to a low status) *kāyastha* and cannot sit by the side of those belonging to high families. *Ibid*, p. 54, B.E.

86 " Your house will be full of wealth and paddy, and then all the *kulīn kāyasthas* will marry their sons and daughters in your family." *Ibid*, p. 54, B.E.

87 " I know that there must be quarrels where there are the *kulīns*." *Ibid*, p. 61.

This kulīnism produced also other shocking abuses. Polygamy had become a regular habit with the *kulīns*, as they expected a substantial dowry in each marriage.[88] In such circumstances, any sincere attachment on the part of the husbands to their wives could hardly exist; and the poor girls, being always pressed for more and more money by their unmatched and illiterate husbands, spent their lives very miserably. They remained mostly in their fathers' houses, where their husbands came once in two or three years only to exact from them as much money as they could.[89] Though early marriage was generally the rule, yet in the case of a Kulīn's daughter the rule was violated oftener than not. Her parents were bound to wait till they could collect money sufficient for their daughter's dowry. Sometimes, from financial considerations a girl of 11 or 12 was handed over as a wife to a grey-haired man.[90]

polygamy.

dowry.

The dowry system was not so rigorous among the non-kulīns.[91] Stavorinus observes that the evils of Kulīnism and polygamy "were more shocking among the Brahmins than (among) the other castes."[92]

Dowry system not so rigorous among the non-kulīns.

[88] Anekera pati tñei pati mora vāma." (my husband is unkind to me as he has many other wives); *ibid.* "Plurality of wives is admitted throughout the East." Verelst, p. 136.

[89] "If he comes once in three or four years, he demands presents of me just on coming to the bed. He will use sweet words if I can give him the little amount that I collect by selling the cotton yarn (prepared by me); otherwise he will go away dissatisfied." Bhāratacandra, p. 93, B.E.

[90] (*a*) "Umā has got a necklace of pearls round her neck, while that old fellow has there a bead of bones. Alas! how will my darling Umā live in that old fellow's house. My darling Umā is a doll of gold. How can that old lunatic fellow be called her husband?" Bhāratacandra, pp. 19-20, B.E.

(*b*) "My young daughter Gaurī is of innocent mind, but I am going to marry her to an old man, who has spent the three-fourths of his life ... ... I will not marry my darling Gaurī to this old fellow, so long as I am alive." *Śivāyana*, by Rāmeśvara, p. 29, B.E.

It appears from these passages that under these traditional names of Śiva and Durgā, the poets have unfolded a dark picture of contemporary society. These realistic and minute descriptions were not the product of poetic fancy, but were drawn from the actual facts of the social life of the day.

[91] Craufurd, Vol. II, p. 56.

[92] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 440.

Social relations between the Hindus and the Muslims

Living side by side for centuries together, the Hindu and Muhammadan communities imbibed some of each other's ideas and customs. Whenever two types of civilisation come into contact with each other, it is quite natural that one would exercise its influence on the other, at least to some extent. Hinduism stood patiently and steadily before the onrush of the militant forces of Islam without losing its assimilative power in the least, and as soon as the storm of Muslim invasions had subsided, it cast its influence on the followers of Islam. Similarly, the influence of Islam also affected the Hindu society in some measure. With the growing numerical strength of the converted Indo-Moslem community, and as a result of the liberalising reform movements spread out for several centuries, this process of assimilation and interchange of customs and thought drew the two communities closer and closer.

Mutual assimilation of customs and thought.

It is worthy of note that we find important illustration of this mutual assimilation of customs and thought even in the age of the great orthodox emperor, Aurugzeb. Alwāl, a Muhammadan poet, translated the Hindi poem '*Padmāvat*' into Bengali, and wrote several poems on *Vaiṣṇava* subjects, in the 17th century.[93] Dr. D. C. Sen writes that "the manuscripts of Padmāvat, hitherto obtained, all belong to the border-lands of Aracan in the back-woods of Chittagong, copied in Persian characters and preserved by the rural Muhammadan folk of those localities. No Hindu has ever yet cared to read them. This goes to prove how far the taste of the Muhammadans was imbued with Hindu culture. This book, that we should have thought, could be interesting only to Hindu readers, on account of its lengthy disquisitions on theology and Sanskrit Rhetoric, has been strangely preserved, ever since Aurungzeb's time, by Moslems

Important illustrations in the reign of Aurangzeb:

[93] D. C. Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature*, p. 624.

for whom it could apparently have no attraction, nay to whom it might even seem positively repellent. From the time of Magana Thākur, the Muhammadan minister, till the time of Shaikh Hāmidullah of Chittagong, who published it in 1893—covering a period of nearly 250 years, this book was copied, read, and admired by the Muhammadans of Chittagong exclusively."[94] In Kṣemānanda's *Manasāmaṅgala*, written towards the later part of the 17th century, there is a passage which tells us that in the steel-chamber prepared for Lakṣmīndra, a copy of the Qurān was kept along with other sacred charms to avert Manasā Devī's wrath.[95]

and in the mid-eighteenth century.

By the middle of the 18th century, this process of mutual assimilation advanced a long way. Shahāmat Jang and Saulat Jang once enjoyed the *Holi* festival, for seven days, in the garden of Motijhil at Murshidābād.[96] On that occasion, about 200 reservoirs were filled with coloured water, heaps of *ābira* (red powder) and saffron were collected, and more than five hundred dancing-girls, dressed in costly robes and jewels, appreared in a body every morning and evening, mustering from different parts of the garden. After the treaty of Alinagar (9th February, 1757), Nawāb Sirājuddaulah proceeded to Murshidābād, and enjoyed the *Holi* festival in his palace at Mansurgañj,[97] which he had got erected shortly before he ascended the *masnad* of Bengal. Once while at Patna, Nawāb Mir Jāfar crossed the Ganges with many of the gentry of the town and participated in the enjoyment of the *Holi* festival.[98] It is said that on his death-bed, Mir Jāfar, on Nandakumār's persuasion, drank a few

[94] *Ibid*, p. 626.

[95] *Ibid*, p. 793 and p. 288.

[96] Muzaffarnāmāh, fs. 86a-86b. The author of Muzaffarnāmah was himself present on this occasion.

[97] Muzaffarnāmāh, f. 123b.

[98] *Ibid*, f. 137a; Siyar (Eng. trans.), Vol. II, p. 266.

It is important to note that not only Mir Jāfar, but also many of the gentry of the city, attended the festival. On this occasion, Mir Jāfar amused himself in the company of a woman named Farzāna, who might be regarded as an example of that type of professional dancing girls, five hundred of whom had been engaged by Shahāmat Jang.

drops of water offered in libation over the idol of Kirīteśvarī.[99] The Muhammadans offered '*pujā*' at Hindu temples, as the Hindus offered '*sinni*' at Muhammadan mosques.[100] We read in a contemporary Bengali poem called the Behulā Sundarī, written by Hāmidullah of Chittagong, that the Brāhmaṇs, who had assembled to select an auspicious day for the hero's journey abroad, consulted the Qurāṇ for that purpose. The hero was the son of an orthodox Hindu merchant, but he followed the injunctions 'as if they were laid down in the Vedās,' and started on his voyage praying to Allah for his safety. In a poem entitled Jāmil Dilārām, written in 1750 A.D., by Aptāb-uddin, another Muhammadan poet of Chittagong, a Muhammadan is described as undertaking a journey to the nether worlds to seek a boon from the *saptarṣis* or the seven sages of the Hindus.[101]

Worship of a common God, *Satya Pīra*, by Hindus and Muhammadans alike.

This interchange of ideas and customs had long ago led to the evolution of a common god, Satya Pīra, worshipped by Hindus and Muhammadans alike.[102] We find in Bhāratacandra's poem on *Satya Pīra* that a Hindu merchant named Sadānanda got a daughter through the favour of the god *Satya Pīra*, whom he had vowed some offerings; but very soon the merchant forgot to fulfil his vow, and incurred the wrath of the said god, as a result of which his son-in-law met with a premature death.[103] It is related in a contemporary work, entitled 'Samasera Gājīra Pñuthi,' that one night a Hindu goddess appeared thrice before the Gājī in his dreams, and in obedience to her behest, the Gājī worshipped her the next morning with the

Worship of Hindu Gods by Muhammadans.

[99] Siyar (Eng. Trans.), Vol. II, p. 558. It is worthy of note that a Hindu could, without any hesitation, ask a Moslem to drink the water of libation poured on a Hindu idol and that it was drunk in faith. For *Kirīteśvarī*, *vide ante*, p. 67, foot note.

[100] D. C. Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature*, p. 793. [101] *Ibid*, p. 796.

[102] We can compare the numerous poems on *Satya Pira*, written in old Bengali. *Vide ibid*, pp. 396-97.

[103] Bhāratacandra's *Granthāvali* (New Victoria Press Publication), p. 1.

help of the Brāhmaṇs and according to due Hindu rites.[104] A Bengali document,[105] dated 1732 A.D., which marks the victory of the Sahajiyā cult over the orthodox Vaiṣṇava cult, has got some Muhammadan signatories as its witnesses, and it is really significant that even in matters of social and religious changes, the opinion and testimony of the Muhammadans were sought and obtained by their Hindu brethren. Many of the Muhammadans believed in the principles of Hindu astrology and were as particular in observing them as the Hindus.[106] It has been already noted how Sarfarāz Khān and Alivardi selected auspicious moments for starting on their journeys, or undertaking expeditions, in consultation with astrologers. Mir Kāsim "understood a little of astrology and believed in its maxims and predilections ; he got a child's horoscope accurately drawn by able astrologers."[107] Muslim writers of the 18th century composed a number of works in praise of the Hindu gods and goddesses, and on Hindu music.[108] For example, Vaiṣṇavadās in his work called *Padakalpataru*, written in this period, quotes the *padas* (songs in praise of Vaiṣṇava gods) from eleven Muslim writers.[109] This shows that Vaiṣṇava and orthodox Hindu notions and thoughts had deeply influenced the inner stratum of Muhammadan society in Bengal. Thus, in the field

Muhammadan signatories in a document dealing with Vaiṣṇava religious matters.

Principles of Hindu astrology understood and observed by the Muhammadans.

Muslim writers of Vaiṣṇava works.

[104] Typical Selections, Part II, p. 1851.

[105] S. R. Mitra, *Types of Early Bengali Prose* and D. C. Sen, *Typical Selections*, Part II, pp. 1638-43.

[106] "So that between the Mahometan and Gentoo (Hindu) astrologers together, one half of the year is taken up in unlucky days. The head astrologer is ever present at all their councils ; no new enterprise is begun without his being first consulted and his veto is as effectual as that of a Tribune in the Roman Senate." Scrafton, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[107] Siyar, Vol. II, p. 387.

[108] *History of Bengali Language and Literature*, pp. 798-804, and *Prācīn Puthir Vivaraṇa*, by Abdul Karim.

[109] The Bengali magazine '*Bicitrā*,' Māgh, 1335, B.S.

of ordinary life the two communities were living side by side in harmony and mutual attachment without being affected in the least by bitter relations among the prominent members of the two communities living in the court-circles.[110] It continued to be so also in later times,[111] and a rapprochement should not be impossible to-day.

Harmony and mutual attachment in ordinary life.

[110] *Cf.* " Yet an Englishman cannot but wonder to see how little the subjects in general are affected by any revolution in the Government; it is not felt beyond the small circle of the court." Scrafton, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

[111] Daulat Rāo Sindhiā and his officers joined *Muharram* processions in green dress like the Muhammadans (Dr. S. N. Sen, *Administrative System of the Marāthas*, p. 401). Mr. A. F. M. Abdul Ali, M.A., F.R.S.L., has described (in an article printed in Bengal: Past and Present, 1932) on the authority of Jām-i-Jahān Numā, a Persian weekly of the good old days, how the Durgā Pujā festival was celebrated at the Delhi Court in 1825 A.D. On 2nd February, 1811 A.D., Hamilton Buchanan saw at Bhāgalpur the Hindus " fully as much engaged as the Moslems " in the celebration of Muharrum.

CHAPTER X

Conclusion

Alivardi's regime of sixteen years forms, indeed, an important period in the history of the Bengal Subah. But it was not so glorious or peaceful as the accounts of Ghulām Hussain and Karam Ali would lead us to believe, though in comparison with the subsequent years of the 18th century it stands out as a brigbter epoch. Politically as well as economically, we find during these years the earlier stages of the degeneration that became fully manifest later on. Alivardi was not destined to enjoy peacefully what he had gained by treachery and force, and was acquiesced in by the imbecile Delhi Emperor. The same disruptive forces, as had been then distracting the other parts of India, exercised their influence on Bengal also, and destroyed all chances of a peaceful rule here. For the greater part of Alivardi's administration, the Marātha raids, and the Afghān insurrections, produced confusion and calamities of tremendous magnitude. It must be admitted to the credit of Alivardi that being endowed with prudence, tact, ability, he made earnest efforts to combat these evils, and was partially successful. But the tide of general disorder could by no means be stemmed. It appeared in roaring waves as soon as Alivardi closed his days ; and the European traders (the English, the French and the Dutch) were consequently emboldened to interfere in the politics of Bengal, just as they had been doing for some years past in Southern India. It was not long before Bengal, like Peninsular India, witnessed political revolutions profoundly affecting the course of her history.

The economic progress of a country presupposes the prevalence of peace and order. In spite of the apparent prosperity of Bengal during the regime of Alivardi, the political turmoils

of the period were eating into her economic vitality. Commerce came to be impeded by various factors, industries began to deteriorate, manufactures to be debased, and agriculture having been disturbed, prices of food stuffs, and other necessary articles of common use, rose high. To put it in a nutshell, the pre-Plassey period of Bengal history left a legacy of economic decline for the succeeding years.

The debased political atmosphere of the time did not fail to cast a deteriorating influence on society and literature. In society and in the sphere of education, we notice a mere continuation of the traditional features, but no well-thought-out and honest attempts at elevating the moral and the intellectual standard of the people. No Buddha, no Chandidās, or Chaitanya appears to inspire the people with high religious and social ideals at such a critical period in the history of Bengal, nay of India. The leaders of the province like Mahārājah Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā, Rājah Rājaballabh of Dacca, and others, though patrons of literature and education in their respective jurisdictions according to their own light, were very much engrossed with political intrigues to secure their personal ends, and had not the wide vision to look at things from the noble standpoint of the interests of humantiy at large. The literature that sprang up under their patronage was also of a vitiated taste, though rich in vocabulary. As Dr. D. C. Sen remarks, "the style and the spirit both became depraved—the former by a vainglorious pedantry which made descriptions grotesque by their over-drawn niceties, the serious often passing into the burlesque --and the latter by scurrilous obscenities grosser than anything in Sterne, Smollett, of Wycherly and by the introduction of characters like those of Hirā Māḷīni and Bidu Brāhmaṇī—accessories to illicit love of the most revolting type." [1]

Nevertheless, the period supplies a student of history with two important lessons. It shows that, even in political circles,

[1] D. C. Sen, *History of Bengali Language and Literature*, p. 620.

crime begets crime, and that a power gained by treachery and force cannot be a source of real peace and happiness to a usurping adventurer or his family, as is well illustrated in the case of Alivardi. It also demonstrates that it was even then not impossible for a wise and tactful ruler of a country, so much internally divided as Bengal, to secure ordinarily the support of all the communities in his administration. We have seen how Alivardi managed his government with the active and sincere co-operation of his Hindu as well as Muslim officers, though an under-current of Hindu discontent probably continued to flow below the surface. As a matter of fact, Sirājuddaulah committed a grave mistake of policy by openly alienating the sympathy of the Hindu officers, zamindars, and bankers. Hindu support became a source of strength to Alivardi, while its absence proved fatal to his successor.

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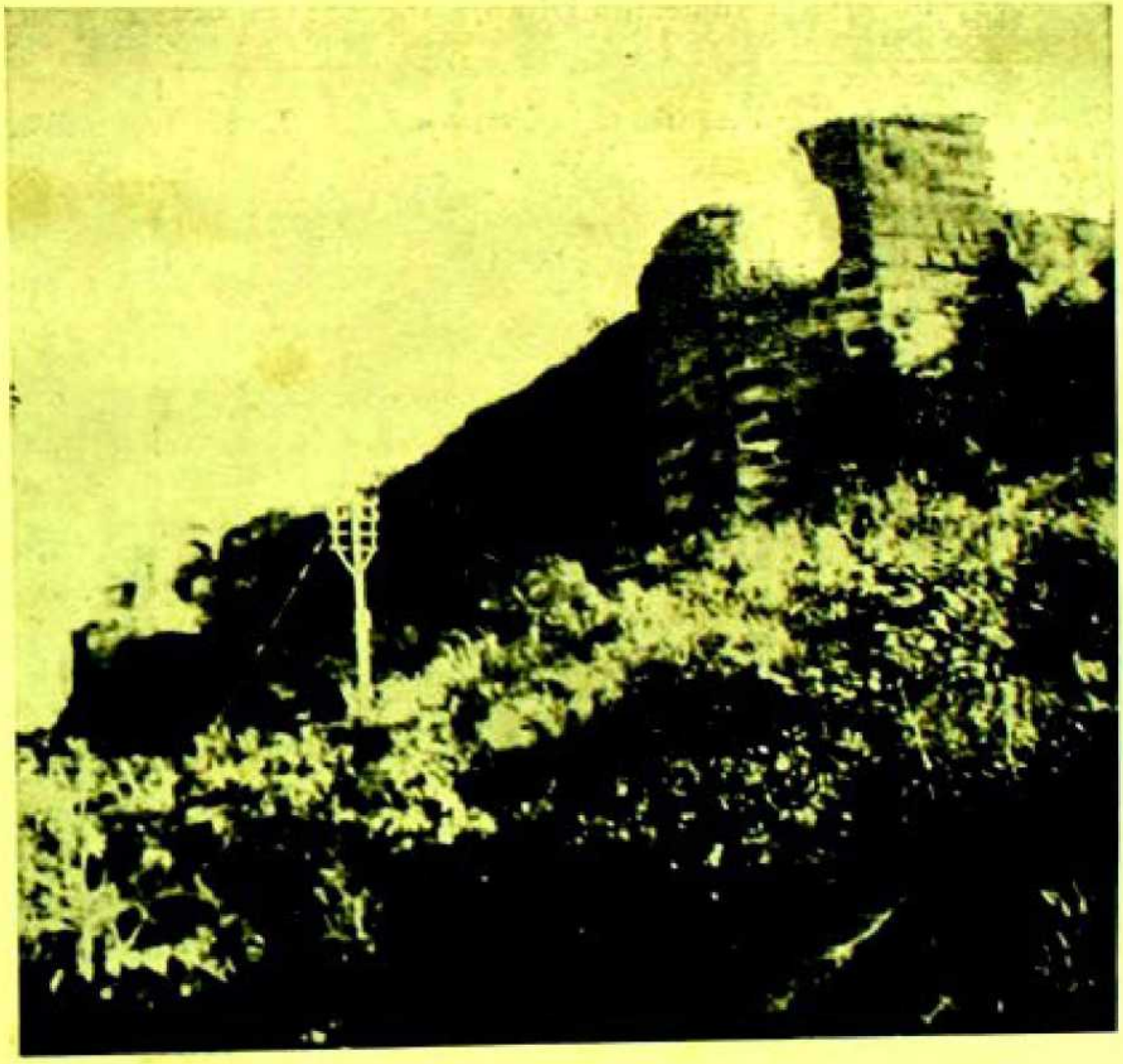
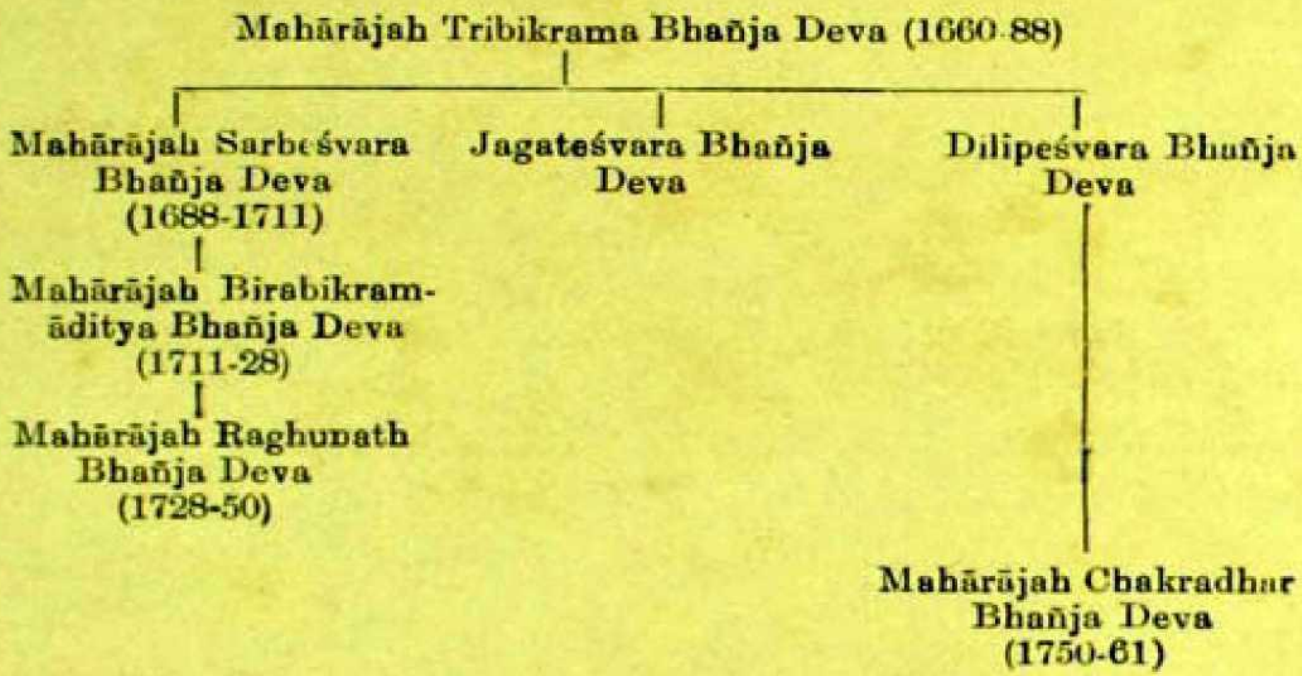
APPENDIX A



General view of the Ruins of the Teliāgarhi Fort (northern wall) from the Railway Line

APPENDIX A'

Rulers of Mayurbhañj



Appendix 'B'

The President's letter to the Nawāb :—

"The bad consequences attending our Company's affairs from unjust complaints of the Armenians and others to your Excellency, are beyond expression. To add still more to our misfortune, the hardships we suffer from the forces on our Cāssimbāzār Factory, is without precedent, distressing us in our credit as well as in every other manner the most disobliging, by which it appears the complaints act rather as open enemies to our country than humble petitioners for justice with your Excellency, they well knowing the Company are not aggressors; nor was it in our power to prevent the accidents that have happened, which I have before taken the liberty to remonstrate to your Excellency that had they been in any manner concerned therein, I would have taken care. You should not have been troubled with any complaints, but should have complied with whatever had been aggreeable to your Excellency's justice. As the case now is we have very particularly advised our Company thereof, and the great favour you are pleased to show these people. But it requires a length of time before we can have an answer: humbly request your Excellency will permit the Company's affairs to go on in the usual manner without any further molestation." (Consultations, 6th July, 1749 A. D.)

Appendix ' C '

Of all merchants the greatest and the picture of friendship, Mr. Drake, Governor of the English Company, whom God preserve.

" By the favour of the Almighty the bright eyes and soul of Nawab Munsoor An Mullick Bahadur, arrived at Muxadavad on the 24th Secandar Son Paunch; your friendship, praises, presents and going to meet him, he has told me a great deal about so much that I cannot express it. I am extremely pleased and delighted with you and a thousand times remain sensible of it and in return by the grace of God the Company's business, I will be very favourable to." (Consultations, 11th October, 1752 A.D.)

Appendix 'D'

نقل پروانه نواب مهابت جنگ بهادر دام اقباله

رفعت وعوالی پناه شهامت دستگاه برخوردار راجه رام نرائن مورد مراحم باشند - درینولا از خبر کلفت اثر واقعهٔ راجه جانکی رام بهادر که از نوشته مرلیدهر هرکاره و چهتی اقبالمندان جگت سیٹهه و مهتاب راے و راجه سروپ چند برضوح انجامید - چون برادر رفیق و دلسوز بود به خدای عالم الغیب ظاهر که ازین واقعه سخت متاثر شد - اما از مشیت الٰهی چاره و تدبیر نیست - رضا به قضا الله تعالیٰ ازان جاکه کاروبار ضروریست و هیچ امر مانع نیست - آن نیابت و نظامت صوبهٔ بهار از طرف نواب صاحب به از جان نواب منصور الملک بهادر سلمه الله تعالیٰ مقرر کرده شد - و سند به مهر ایشان از متعاقب می رسد باید که خود را نائب مستقل دانسته بخاطر جمع و استقلال تمام در سر انجام امور نظامت بنوعیکه انظام سابق برهم نخورد - بلکه از بهر سابق حسن انجامد - مساعی موفوره بکار برند - انشاء الله تعالیٰ بشرط راستی و دوستی نظامت سرانجام از سرکار و حسن سلوک بارعایا و برایا چنانکه دل می خواهد خواهد رسید - درین باب تاکید دانند -

[Nawāb Alivardi's *parawānah* appointing Rāmnārain Deputy Governor of Bihār,—copied from *Dastur-ul Inshā* of Munsī Vijayrām.]

Appendix 'E'

Letter from the Court of Directors to the Council in Calcutta, dated 31st January, 1755 :—

"As the sale of our Bengal goods is now ended, we find it necessary to confirm to you the several remarks made in the course of our list of investments on the several species of goods brought on the new plan at the Aurungs compared with the same kinds bought off or contracted for with the merchants, the sales of which have answered even beyond our expectation in favour of the former, and was in no kinds more remarkable than in the Orua Cossaes, and Mulmuls and Doreas Cossajura; the common sort of the two last kinds purchased at the Aurungs, sold from twenty to thirty per cent. higher than what are invoiced as fine bought of the merchants per Durrington and Flamonth at much higher prices. The Mulmuls Santipore in general are neither amended in quality nor reduced in price in proportion to most other sorts purchased at the Aurungs. But thanks to the conduct of these merchants which has drove you to expedients which might not otherways have been thought of, you now find many sorts of goods are fabricated within our bounds, cheap and of good qualities, and may be had at the first hand as it is evidently for our interest. Therefore, to encourage not only all the weavers now in our bounds but likewise to draw as many others as possible from all countries to reside under our protection, we shall depend upon your utmost efforts to accomplish the same and shall hope the time is not far off wherein we shall find a great share of your investment made under your own eyes.

The utmost attention must always be paid to the conduct of our servants at the subordinates through whose hands so great a proportion of our estate passes. The annual remarks we have made in our lists of investment, together with what appears upon the face of your letters and consultations, especially those

received last season, show the necessity of it. At Cossimbuzar our servants have so remarkably fallen off, in that once valuable article of raw silk, not to mention others, that we cannot suppress the suspicion that must naturally arise against their management. Our servants at Dacca likewise, who for a considerable time gave us great satisfaction, have of late done quite the reverse, and we have as much reason to complain of our people at Jugdea.

We therefore hereby direct that immediately upon the receipt of this a supervising committee be formed which is to be composed of the President for the time being, Mr. Charles Manningham, Mr. Richard Becher, and Mr. John Zepheniah Holwell and in case of the death or absence of any of the before mentioned persons, the President is to fill up the said committee to the number of four with such other members of the Council as he shall judge best qualified for such an important trust.

This Committee is to enquire into the manner of making the investments and management in general at the subordinate settlements; they are likewise to enquire into the particular conduct of our servants employed there for some time past, now, and in future, and whether they have or do make any unjust advantages, and what in the management of the investment or in any other branches of their employes, and they are to consider of and point out such regulation as they shall think necessary, and the said committee is empowered to send for such books and papers and examine all such persons, whether blacks or whites, as they shall judge can give any information in the matters before them, and they are to report the facts with their opinion upon the whole to the Council Board from time to time. The Board is then to take into consideration the said reports and determine thereupon impartially and according to the best of their judgments, always remembering to do the utmost in their power to recover what the Company are defrauded of. And you are further directed to enter all such reports, together with your proceedings thereupon at large, in your diary for our information.

Appendix ' E '

Letter from the Court of Directors to the Council in Calcutta, dated 31st January, 1755 :—

"As the sale of our Bengal goods is now ended, we find it necessary to confirm to you the several remarks made in the course of our list of investments on the several species of goods brought on the new plan at the Aurungs compared with the same kinds bought off or contracted for with the merchants, the sales of which have answered even beyond our expectation in favour of the former, and was in no kinds more remarkable than in the Orua Cossaes, and Mulmuls and Doreas Cossajura; the common sort of the two last kinds purchased at the Aurungs, sold from twenty to thirty per cent. higher than what are invoiced as fine bought of the merchants per Durrington and Flamonth at much higher prices. The Mulmuls Santipore in general are neither amended in quality nor reduced in price in proportion to most other sorts purchased at the Aurungs. But thanks to the conduct of these merchants which has drove you to expedients which might not otherways have been thought of, you now find many sorts of goods are fabricated within our bounds, cheap and of good qualities, and may be had at the first hand as it is evidently for our interest. Therefore, to encourage not only all the weavers now in our bounds but likewise to draw as many others as possible from all countries to reside under our protection, we shall depend upon your utmost efforts to accomplish the same and shall hope the time is not far off wherein we shall find a great share of your investment made under your own eyes.

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received last season, show the necessity of it. At Cossimbuzar our servants have so remarkably fallen off, in that once valuable article of raw silk, not to mention others, that we cannot suppress the suspicion that must naturally arise against their management. Our servants at Dacca likewise, who for a considerable time gave us great satisfaction, have of late done quite the reverse, and we have as much reason to complain of our people at Jugdea.

We therefore hereby direct that immediately upon the receipt of this a supervising committee be formed which is to be composed of the President for the time being, Mr. Charles Manningham, Mr. Richard Becher, and Mr. John Zepheniah Holwell and in case of the death or absence of any of the before mentioned persons, the President is to fill up the said committee to the number of four with such other members of the Council as he shall judge best qualified for such an important trust.

This Committee is to enquire into the manner of making the investments and management in general at the subordinate settlements; they are likewise to enquire into the particular conduct of our servants employed there for some time past, now, and in future, and whether they have or do make any unjust advantages, and what in the management of the investment or in any other branches of their employes, and they are to consider of and point out such regulation as they shall think necessary, and the said committee is empowered to send for such books and papers and examine all such persons, whether blacks or whites, as they shall judge can give any information in the matters before them, and they are to report the facts with their opinion upon the whole to the Council Board from time to time. The Board is then to take into consideration the said reports and determine thereupon impartially and according to the best of their judgments, always remembering to do the utmost in their power to recover what the Company are defrauded of. And you are further directed to enter all such reports, together with your proceedings thereupon at large, in your diary for our information.

As the entrusting of the conduct and management of our affairs at the subordinates to people of experience is of the highest concernment to the Company, it must be observed by you for the future as a standing rule or order, that our set of servants at Cossimbazar do consist of two of your Council and one senior merchant at least, besides junior servants; at Dacca, of one of your Council, a senior merchant and junior servants, and that one of the best qualified servants next below your Council be always appointed chief of Jugdea, Luckapore (Laskipur) or wherever else the Jugdea settlement shall be moved to."

Appendix 'F'

List of *dustories* realised at the several ghāṭs belonging to the Nawāb's 'putchetrah' (*pachotrā*) :—

Places.	What was agreed to be taken.		What was actually taken.	
	Rs.	A.	Rs.	A.
Aurungābād (in the Murshidābād district, 31 miles S. E. of Rājmahal).	4	0	6	0
Burragoreah (Giriā near Rājmahal)	1	0	10	0
Godāgārī (on the Padmā River in Rājsāhī District).	2	0	7	0
Mcorcha (Rennell's Murcha on the Cāssimbāzār-Rāmpur Boāliā Road).	3	0	7	0
Jellengy ...	3	10	14	0
Butsolah ...	3	6	14	0
Seberāmpur ...	2	0	13	0
Lullydangah ...	1	0	8	0
Buxypore ...	1	0	7	0
Bowley ...	0	8	7	0
Turmohanny ...	0	8	6	0
Surdah ...	2	0	10	0
Nazerpore (Nāzirpur) ...	1	0	7	0
Custeah (Kusṭhiā) ...	0	8	5	0
Aukdunk ...	0	8	3	0
	26	0	114	0

(Letter to Court, 21st February, 1753 A.D.)

Appendix 'G'

"Dustuck to all Rahdars,[1] Guzarbans,[2] Chowkeydars, Izardars,[3] etc., and to all the Golls,[4] Guzars,[5] within our districts as far as the Pechowbrah (pachotrā) of Muxadavad (Murshidābād) extends, be it known that agreeable to the complaint made by the Gomasthas of the English Company the Nabob granted them a perwannah for all the Ghāṭs (ferries) in the Soubaship of Bengal that contrary to their ancient customs no new Imposition be laid on their Goods by the Rahadary's, etc. Because they have a Phirmaund from the King as also Senauds of former Subahs exempting them from such impositions. For this reason I wrote that my Pachowterah Ghats do not take more than what is now settled as particularized below. Take care they have no further cause of complaint; in this affair be punctual and observant :—

	Rs.	A.
Auruñgabād	4	0
Barrah Gurreah	1	0
Godah Gurry	2	0
Jellengy	3	10
Butsallah	0	6
Sebarāmpur	2	0
Lullydangah	1	0
Buxypore	1	0
Bāllu Bāburāmpur	0	8
Turmohaunny	2	0
Nazarpore (Nāzirpur)	1	0
Custeah (Kusṭhiā)	0	8
Aukdunk	0	8 "

(Letter to Court, 21st February, 1756 A.D.)

[1] "A collector of tolls or transit duties."

[2] "An officer appointed to take tolls both on the high roads and at ferries."

[3] "A farmer of any item of public revenue, whether from land, customs, or any other sources; the renter of a village or estate at a stipulated rate."—Wilson's Glossary, p. 214.

[4] Golā—"A grain or salt store or market; a place where it is sold wholesale."—*Ibid*, p. 18.

[5] "A ferry station for boat, a place of transit or toll."—*Ibid*, p. 192.

Appendix 'H'

Letter from the Nawāb to the Burdwān Rājah :—

"I received an Arassdoss from the English Governor in which he acquaints me that the Gomashta Ramjeebun Cubbrage being indebted to an Englishman, they had set peons upon your house agreeable to their custom, for which reason you have put Chowkees upon all the Company's Factories within your districts and stopped their business imprisoning Gomashtas. This manner of acting is contrary to your interest and very wrong, as it is by no means allowable that a zemindar should take such a step without an order first had from me. The English are foreigners and have settled in our Country on a dependence of our protection in their Trade ; and if they are treated in this manner, the consequence will be their withdrawing themselves and their Trade, on which account I positively direct that on the immediate receipt of this Porwanah you remove the Chowkeys you have put on their factories, and let their business have the usual currency without any further trouble."

(Consultations, May 5, 1755 A.D.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Persian Sources :—

(A) Ahwāl-i-Aliwārdī Khān (as mentioned in ' Descriptive Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts ' published by A. S. B., Bibliotheca Indica Work No. 248) or Tārikh-i-Mahabat Jang (British Museum Additional MS., No. 27316, Rieu, Vol. I, pp. 311-12). This work gives a very valuable and detailed description of the history of the Bengal Subah during the mid-eighteenth century, especially of the administration of Alivardi. The author, an eye-witness of the political events of Bengal since the time of Sarfarāz, gives us many new facts and dates, which are not found in any other contemporary work. I have consulted a copy of it, preserved in the Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. The name of the author has not been disclosed anywhere in the book, but it is clear from his personal references in several places (f. 8 and f. 12 of my copy) that he was connected with the political affairs of Bengal since the time of Sarfarāz Khān. He writes in one place (f. 42) that he had to suspend the work of completing (first 4 folios had been apparently written before) this book till 1177 A. H. (1763 A.D.). He accompanied Mir Kāsim to Allahabad where his father died, and he himself fell ill ; but he resumed the work of writing out the remaining portion during the third quarter of the month of Shāban, 1177 A.H., when it was completed. The author is modest enough be crave the indulgence of the readers for inaccuracies or exaggerations. Mr. J. Hindley has ascribed the authorship of the work to Yusuf Ali Khān, son of Ghulām Ali Khān, an intimate friend of Mahabat Jang Alivardi. This opinion is correct. We know from Ghulām Husain, the author of Siyar-ul-mutakherin, that Ghulām Ali was a distinguished noble, who acted for some time as *diwān* of Bihār, whose son Yusuf Ali married a daughter of Sarfarāz Khān,

and who helped Alivardi on several occasions. Ghulām Husain also writes that he describes the sufferings of the Nawāb's troops, in course of their journey from Burdwān to Kāṭwah, on the authority of a contemporary memoir writer, Yusuf Ali Khān, who was then present in the Nawāb's party. This Yusuf Ali is the author of this manuscript, and we find that Siyar's description of the Nawāb's march from Burdwān to Kāṭwah is exactly similar to that given in it (fs. 34-35). In fact, this work seems to have been the principal authority of Ghulām Husain for his account of the Marātha invasions of Bengal and also of the Afghān rebellions. Late Sir H. Elliot, K.C.B., had a copy of Tārikh-Ali-Wārdī-Khān,[1] *i.e.*, a copy of this manuscript.

(B) Siyar-ul-mutakherin (completed in 1782 A.D.). A highly important history of India from 1707 to 1780 with a detailed account of the affairs in the Bengal Subah from 1738 to 1780 A.D. The author Ghulām Husain Tabātab'āi belonged to a distingnished family of Bengal ; his grandfather, Sayyid Alimullah, and his father Hedāyat Ali Khān Bāhādur Āsad Jang, held high offices in the Muslim Government (imperial as well as provincial). He himself took part in the political affairs and military campaigns of the time, served as a representative of Nawāb Mir Kāsim with the Company in Calcutta and was later on engaged under the Company in various capacities (*vide* Asiatic Annual Register for 1801, pp. 26-27). He was a man of fair education, and was thoroughly acquainted with the history of his time. An English translation of this work by a French convert to Islam, Hājī Mustafā, was prepared in Calcutta in 1789.

(C) Muzaffarnāmah. A detailed history of the Bengal Subah from the time of Nawāb Alivardi to 1772 A.D., when Muhammad Rezā Khān, also known as Muzaffar Jang, was deposed by the English. The author Karam Ali states in the preface and in another folio of his work, that he belonged to the

[1] Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1854, p. 248.

family of the Nawābs of Murshidābād. He was on intimate terms with Alivardi, and served as the *faujdār* of Ghorāghāṭ for several years during his regime. He was employed under Muzaffar Jang, and notes that he wrote the present work in 1186 A.H.=1772 A.D. in order to remove his grief caused by the dismissal of his patron, to whom he dedicated it and after whom it was named. A copy of this manuscript is noticed in Rieu, Vol. I, p. 313, one in the India Office Library Catalogue (No. 479), and another in the Catalogue of Persian Manuscripts in the Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. I have utilised the copy preserved in the Oriental Public Library, Patna (O.P.L., SM. No. 609).

(D) Tārikh-i-Bangālah by Salimullah. This is a history of Bengal, from 1107 A.H. to the death of Alivardi Khān (1169 A.H.), full of many interesting and important details. The author states that he wrote this work by order of Henry Vansittart, Governor of Bengal from 1760-1764 (*vide* Rieu, Vol. I, p. 312). An incomplete and rather incorrect translation of it was published (1788 A.D.) by Francis Gladwin in Calcutta under the title of ' A Narrative of the Transactions in Bengal.' A copy of this manuscript is preserved in the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (now known as the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal).

(E) Riyāz-us-Salātin, written in 1786-87 A.D. by Ghulām Husain Salim of Māldah at the request of Mr. George Udni, who had employed him as his munsī. The author of this work seems to have based his accounts to a great extent on the history of Salimullah. An English translation of it has been published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

(F) Waqāi-i-Fath Bangālah or Waqāi-i-Mahabat Jang by Muhammad Wafā (manuscript No. 1776 in the Oriental Public Library, Patna). The author gives an account of the events, which took place immediately before and after the accession of Mahabat Jang Alivardi to the throne of Bengal brought down to 1161 A.H.=1748 A.D. From internal evidences in

the book we gather that the author, a panegyrist of Alivardi, dedicated the work to him. The author's narrative is not critical at all. The only importance of his book lies in this that it gives us some important dates and a few new facts regarding the Afghāns. The State Library of His Highness the Nawāb of Rāmpur possesses a copy of this work, and I have got a transcript of it through the kindness of His Highness the Chief Minister of that State.

(G) Dastur-ul-Inshā complied by Munsī Vijayrām of Lucknow in 1769 A.D. It is a very useful collection of letters, which contains many new and important facts regarding the history of Bengal and Bihār during the mid-eighteenth century, especially relating to Rājah Rāmnārāin. Most of these letters were written by Rājah Rāmnārāin to the Nawāb and his officers posted in different places, and a few by Rājah Dhirajnārāin, brother of Rājah Rāmnārāin. I could get this volume in the collections of Rāi Mathurā Prasād, B.A., of Patna City, who is a representative of the family of Rājah Rāmnārāin, and occupies the Rājah's old house on the bank of the Ganges.

(H) Dastur-ul-Inshā complied by Munsī Shaikh Yār Muhammad Qalandar (O. P. L., MS. No. 842). Letters dealing with facts in India, especially transactions in Bengal during the years 1151 A.H.-1170 A.H. We find in f. 2B and f. 137A that it was compiled by Munsī Shaikh Yār Muhammad Qalandar, at the instance of his patron Fidāi Khān, *i.e.*, Sayyid Ghulām Husan Khān, for the use of young readers. It is stated in a long letter (fs. 86A-107A) that Yār Md. Khān was present in Bihār during the Deputy Governorship of Alivardi and took part in an abortive conspiracy against him in alliance with Kāmgār Khān and others. This volume contains several letters written by Shahāmat Jang, when Alivardi left in charge of the government of Bengal during his march to Orissā in pursuit of the Marāthas (*vide* Chapter III of this thesis). A copy of it was printed in Calcutta in 1240 A.H.

(I) Khulāṣat-ut-Tawārikh by Kalyān Singh. The second

bāb (part) of this work contains an account of the events of Bengal from the time of Alivardi till the time of the author's deposition from the Deputy Governorship of Bihār in 1783 A.D. The work was completed in 1227 A.H. (1812 A.D.), and seems to be based to a large extent on Siyar-ul-mutakherin. The author's father, Shitāb Rāy, was Deputy Governor of Bihār (1765-73 A.D.), and the author himself took active parts in many of the political events of the time. I have utilized the copy of this manuscript preserved in the Oriental Public Library, Patna (O.P.L., MS. No. 594); *vide* also Rieu, Vol. III., p. 925.

(J) Bayān-waqāi by Khwajah Abdul Karim Kāshmīrī, who accompanied Nādir Shāh and travelled in India, Persia, Arabia, and Ceylon, between 1151 A. H. and 1156 A.H. (1738-42 A.D.). It contains incidental references to the Bengal revolution of 1739-40 A.D. This manuscript was obtained by me from the Kujhuā Wakf Library, through my esteemed friend Prof. S. H. Askari, M.A., B.L., of Patna College, and was presented before the Indian Historical Records Commission at Patna in December, 1930. An incomplete English translation of it is preserved in the Imperial Library, Calcutta.

(K) Hadiqat-ul-Aqālīm by Murtaza Husayn known as Allah Yār Usmāni Balgrāmi (O.P.L., MS. No. 637). This is an extensive geographical work, containing detailed historical, biographical, and literary information. The author, who was born at Balgrām in 1719 A.D., writes in the preface that in 1729 A.D. he entered the service of Mubāriz-ul-mulk, the Subahdār of Gujarāt, and till 1773 served successively in the courts of Sáādat Ali and Safdar Jang of Oudh, Mir Kāsim Khān, Nāzim of Bengal, and Ahmad Khān Bangash of Farrukhābād. In 1776 A.D. he was introduced to Captain Jonathan Scott, who employed him as one of his Munsīs and requested him to write this work. This book was lithographed in Lucknow in 1879 A. D. *Vide* Elliot, Vol. VIII, pp. 180-83.

(L) Rāhat-ul-Arwāh (O.P.L., MS. No. 1754). A compendium of general history with a special treatment of Bengal

brought down to 1792 A.D., when it was written. It has no independent value of its own. The author Muhammad Rāhat writes in a short preface that his work is merely an abridgment of other Persian and Hindi histories.

(M) Imād-us-sáādat by Sayyid Ghulām Ali Naqui, written in 1807 A.D. Though dealing mainly with Oudh, it gives a short description of Alivardi.

(N) Some biographical works in Persian referring mainly to Rājah Rāmnārāin :—

(*a*) Gul-i-Raānā (MS. No. 701 in O.P.L.). It is a biography of eminent poets complied by Rājah Lachmī Nārāyan of Auruṅgābād in 1768 A.D.

(*b*) Sahifa-i-khusgo (O.P.L.). A biography of poets by Lālā Brindāban Dās of Mathurā, who died at Patna in 1756 A.D.

(*c*) Riyāz-ul-Afkār (O.P.L. MS. No 1784). An interesting biographical work containing accounts of elegant epistolers, with extracts from their works. It was compiled by Wazir Ali Ibrati of Patna in 1850 A.D.

2. Records of the E.I.C. in English containing a vast mass of data for a correct Political, Social, and Economic history of Bengal from the middle of the 18th century onwards :—

(A) Unpublished

(*i*) Letters to the Court of Directors from Bengal Nos. 10-14 (1740-48 A.D.), (*ii*) Nawab of Bengal, 1752. Extract of a letter from Robert Clive dealing with certain monetary transactions, cases of death among the Company's civil servants, the necessity of beating the Nawab of Bengal, etc., (*iii*) Records of Public Department; these include Consultations, General Letters to and from the Court of Directors, and various other papers and correspondence, (*iv*) Letters from the Court of Directors, 1740-64.

(B) Published

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(*a*) Orme, History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan, Vol. II.

(*b*) Capt. Cope, A new History of the East Indies, London, 1758.

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(*e*) Indian Tracts by John Zephaniah Holwell, London, 1774.

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(*g*) Vansittart's Narrative, Vols, I, II, III, London, 1766.

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(*j*) Pattullo, An Essay upon the cultivation of the lands, and improvements of the Revenues of Bengal, London, 1772.

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(*l*) Parker, The History of the War in India, between Serajdowlah, Nawab of Bengal, and the English, with an account of the customs and manners of the inhabitants of India, London, 1789.

(*m*) Abbe de Guyon, A New History of the East Indies, 2 vols., London, 1757.

(*n*) Rennell, Description of the Roads in Bengal and Bihar, London, 1778.

(*o*) Rennell's Journals (Edited by T. D. LaTouche on behalf of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1910).

(*p*) Rennell, Memoir of the Map of Hindostan, London, 1788.

(*q*) Abbe Raynal, A Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of Europeans in the East and West Indies, 6 vols., 1782 edition.

(*r*) Lieut. Col. Alexander Dow, Hindostan (translated from Original Persian with dissertations of Dow), London, 1768.

(*s*) Craufurd, Sketches chiefly relating to the history, religion, learning, and manners of the Hindus, London, 1790.

(*t*) Considerations on the present state of the East India Company's affairs, by a person, now, and for a long time past, interested in them, London, 1764.

(*u*) Grose, Voyage to the East Indies, Vols. I and II, London, 1772.

(*v*) Voyage of H. M. S. Harmich to India in 1745-49, (published in Bengal : Past and Present, April-June, 1933).

5. Contemporary Bengali Literature :—

(A) Bhāratacandra's Granthāvalī.—Bhāratacandra occupies an important place in the History of Bengali Literature and his works are full of many valuable incidental references regarding the social, economic, and political conditions of Bengal during the mid-eighteenth century. He was born about the year 1712 A. D. in a village called Pñeḍo-Vasantapur in the Hughli district and died in 1760 A. D. He was well-read in Sanskrit and Persian, and was for several years the court-poet of Mahārājah Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā on a monthly allowance of Rs. 40. Thus being connected with court-circles, he had a knowledge of many contemporary political events also.

(B) Rāmaprasāda Sena's Granthāvalī.—Like Bhāratacandra, Rāmaprasāda was a contemporary Bengali poet. He was born, on a certain date between 1718 and 1723, in the village of Kumārhaṭṭa near Hālisahar and died in 1775 A. D. In his writings also, we find valuable incidental references to the facts of contemporary social and economic life. He was acquainted with Mahārājah Kṛṣṇacandra of Nadiā and with several other rich men living near about Calcutta, but being rather of a religious turn of mind, he did not care much about worldly prosperity.

(C) Tīrthamaṅgala by Vijayarāma Sena-Viśārada. It is a contemporary book of travels in Bengali of much historical value. We know from internal evidences in the book that it was completed in 1177 B. S. (1770 A. D.). A MS. copy, written by the author himself four months after its completion, was edited by Nagendranāth Vasu and published by the Vaṅgiya Sāhitya-Pariṣad, Calcutta. The author, Vijayarāma, joined Kṛṣṇacandra Ghoṣāla on a pilgrimage to the holy places of

Northern India in 1769 A. D., and he has given very valuable descriptions of the routes followed and the places visited by them. The descriptions being accurate are of much importance for a student of history. Kṛṣṇacandra Ghoṣāla was the elder brother of Gokulacandra Ghoṣāla, the Company's *diwān* from the 27th January, 1767, to the 26th December, 1769.

(D) Rāmeśvara's Śivāyana, written about 1750 A. D.—Here also we find important references to the facts of social and economic history of the time. The writer lived under the patronage of Rājah Yaśovanta Singh of Karnagaḍa in Midnāpur.

(E) Harilīlā by Jayanārāyaṇa Sena.—Jayanārāyaṇa, a contemporary of Bhāratacandra and Rāmaprasāda, was a relative of Rājah Rājballabh of Dacca. He composed 'Harilīlā,' in collaboration with his niece Ānandamayī, in the year 1772. This work, being an important literary production of Bengal during the mid-eighteenth century, contains many valuable information about contemporary conditions of life in the province. It has been recently published by the University of Calcutta.

(F) Mahārāṣṭrapurāṇa by Gaṅgārāma (published in the Vaṅgiya Sāhitya-Pariṣad Patrikā, 1313 B. S., Part IV).—It is a highly valuable piece of historical writing, the surviving manuscript of which was completed on Saturday, the 14th Pous, 1158 B. S. (December, 1751 A. D.). Gaṅgārāma, an eye-witness of the Marātha ravages in Bengal, supplies us with many valuable details regarding these.

(G) Samasera Gājīra Puñthi.—Samasera Gājī was a contemporary of Nawāb Alivardi. The writer of this tract was the Gājī's friend, and he refers carefully to many contemporary historical facts. This work was published some time ago in Chittagong.

(H) Bhavāṅīmaṅgala by Gaṅgānārāyaṅa.—An important Bengali manuscript of mid-eighteenth century containing references to contemporary social life. It has been preserved in the Ratan Library, Suri, Birbhum.

(I) Bṛhatsārāvalī by Rādhāmādhava Ghoṣa, written during the middle of the eighteenth century.—It is a voluminous work having five parts. Śivaratan Mitra, the famous litterateur of Birbhum, had in his library a copy of it, which I have utilised. The author was an inhabitant of a village named Dasgharā in the Bñākurā District, and he refers in his work to many facts of contemporary social life.

(J) Songs of Rāmanidhi Rāya (1741-1834), popularly known as 'Nidu Bābu's ṭappā,' and also songs of the Kaviwālās like Haru Thākur (1738-1813), Nityānanda Vairāgī (1751-1821) and others, incidentally refer to certain features of contemporary society.

(K) Extracts from certain contemporary works, such as *Devisiṁhera Utpīḍana*, *Candrakānta*, Ānandāmayī's *Umāra Vivāha*," Jayanātha Ghoṣa's *Rājopākhyāna*, Dvija Kālidāsa's *Kālikāmaṅgala*, Kavijivana Maitra's *Śivāyana*, Narasiṁha Vasu's *Dharamamaṅgala*, Adbhutācārya's *Rāmāyaṇa*, Dvija Bhavāṇī's *Rāmāyaṇa*, etc., in Dr. D. C. Sen's Typical Selections from Old Bengali Literature, Parts I and II.

(L) S. R. Mitra's Types of Early Bengali Prose (published by the University of Calcutta).—It is a collection of old prose writings in Bengali, some of which are of historical value.

6. Citracampū, a short Sanskrit work written by Vāṇeśvara Vidyālaṅkāra in November, 1744 A.D.

7. Marātha records :—

(A) Selections from the Peshwā Daftar, edited by Mr. G. S. Sardesai (Bombay Government Press).

(B) Aitihāsik Patra-Vyavahār (2nd. ed.), Vol. II, edited by Sardesi and others.

(C) Rājwadé, Marāthānchyā Itihāsāchin Sādhanen, edited by V. K. Rājwadé and others, 21 vols.

8. Secondary Works :—

(A) English :—(*i*) Stewart, History of Bengal, London,

1813; (*ii*) H. T. Colebroke, Remarks on the Husbandry and Internal Commerce of Bengal, Calcutta, 1806; (*iii*) A Descriptive and Historical account of the cotton manufacture of Dacca, by a former Resident of Dacca, London, 1851; (*iv*) Busteed, Echoes from Old Calcutta; (*v*) W. H. Carey, The Good Old Days of the Honourable John Company, 3 vols, Simla, 1882; (*vi*) R. C. Dutt, India under Early British Rule; (*vii*) R. C. Dutt, The Literature of Bengal, Calcutta, 1877, revised edition in London, 1895; (*viii*) Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Fall of the Mughal Empire, Vol. I; (*ix*) J. C. Sinha, Economic Annals of Bengal; (*x*) Hamilton, Trade Relations; (*xi*) Walsh, History of Murshidabad; (*xii*) Sir George C. M. Birdwood, The Industrial Arts of India, London, 1800; (*xiii*) William Milburn, Oriental Commerce, 2 vols., London, 1813; (*xiv*) Robert Montgomery Martin, The History, antiquities, topography, and statistics of Eastern India, etc., London, 1838; (*xv*) By the same author, The Indian Empire, London, 1855-61; (*xvi*) Ward, History of the Hindoos, 3 vols., Serampore, 1818; (*xvii*) Reports and Journals of Hamilton Buchanan, published by B. & O. Research Society; (*xviii*) Nagendra Nath Ghosa, Memoirs of Maharajah Nabakissan, Calcutta, 1901; (*xix*) Mill, History of British India, Vols. 3 and 4; (*xx*) Auber, Rise and Progress of the British Power in India, 2 vols., London, 1837; (*xxi*) Henry Beveridge, A Comprehensive History of India, 3 vols., Edinburgh and London, 1858-62; (*xxii*) Captain Arthur Broome, History of the Rise and Progress of the Bengal Army, Vol. I, Calcutta, 1850; (*xxiii*) Asiatic Researches, Vols. 1-20, Calcutta, 1788-1836; (*xxiv*) Edward Thornton, The History of the British Empire in India, 6 vols., London, 1841; (*xxv*) Ramsay Muir, Making of British India; (*xxvi*) Ascoli, Early Revenue History of Bengal; (*xxvii*) Sitanath Tattabhusan, Social Reform in Bengal; (*xxviii*) D. C. Sen, History of Bengali Language and Literature; (*xxix*) H. N. Sinha, Rise of the Peshwas; (*xxx*) Irvince, Later Mughals; (*xxxi*) Bengal and Bihar District Gazetteers.

(B) Bengali :—(*i*) Kṣitīśavaṁśāvalīcarita by Kārtikeya-candra Rāy ; (*ii*) Kṛṣṇacandracarita by Rājiblocana ; (*iii*) Śrīhaṭṭera Itibṛtta by Achyuta Caran Chaudhuri ; (*iv*) K. P. Bandyopādhyāya, Nabābī Āmalera Bāṅgālara Itihāsa ; (*v*) Nikhil Nāth Rāy, Murshidābād Kāhinī ; (*vi*) Kailās Candra Siṁha, Tripurāra Itihāsa ; (*vii*) D. C. Sen, Baṅgabhāṣā o Sāhitya.

9. Magazines and Journals :—

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ERRATA

Page	1, footnote	read	'became'	for	'become'
,,	5, line 2	,,	'Rezā'	,,	Reza'
,,	6 ,, 1	put	full stop	after	'tactics'
,,	8, ,, 11	read	'Murshid'	for	'Mushid'
,,	9, footnote 52	,,	'called'	,,	'caled'
,,	12, ,, 70	,,	'direct'	,,	'directly'
,,	24, ,,	,,	'39'	,,	'89'
,,	25, line 21	delete	'to'	before	'secure'
,,	27, ,, 9	,,	'in'	,,	'the next'
,,	28, ,, 3	,,	'(Komrah)'		
,,	28, ,, 10	read	'Pāñchu'	for	'Pāñcho'
,,	31, ,, 5	,,	'advanced'	,,	'crossed the river Bhāgirathī'
,,	33, footnote	,,	'101'	,,	'161'
,,	37, line 15	put	,,	after	'near'
,,	38, ,, 10	read	'131'	for	'132'
,,	43, footnote 158	,,	'cavalry'	,,	'avalry'
,,	54, lines 14 & 20	,,	'Raghunāth Bhañja'	,,	'Jagadīśvara Bhañja' (*Vide* Appendix 'A')
,,	55, line 11	,,	'Ujjainā'	,,	'Ujjāinā'
,,	58, footnote line 2	,,	'Paṇdit'	,,	'Pandit'
,,	63, line 12	,,	'Next he'	,,	'Nex the'
,,	64, footnote 53	,,	'Burdwān-Kāṭwah'	,,	'Burdwān Kāṭwah'
,,	67, line 8	,,	'Jawad Khān'	,,	'Jawad Khan'
,,	72, ,, 18	,,	'Kūsārīs'	,,	'Kūasārīs'
,,	81, ,, 8		'Zoncah' perhaps refers to Soneah (*i.e.*, river Son)		
,,	87, ,, 9	read	'an'	before	'opposition'
,,	92, footnote line 3	,,	'a'	,,	'sword'
,,	100, line 12	,,	'the' for 'to'	,,	'recovery'
,,	102, ,, 9	,,	'defection'	for	'defections'
,,	103, ,, 21	,,	'arrive'	,,	'arrived'

Page 105,	footnote	read	'311'	for	'811'
,, 16,	line 8	,,	commencement'	,,	'beginning'
,, 117,	,, 23	,,	'Firstly'	,,	'First'
,, 118,	,, 5	,,	','	after	'of course'
,, 118,	footnote 374	,,	','	,,	'Patrika'
,, 123,	last line	delete	'to'	before	'form'
,, 125,	marginal note	read	'of'	for	'on'
,, 126,	line 24	,,	'carrying'	,,	'carried with'
,, 128,	lines 11 & 13	,,	'Garhani'	,,	'Karhani'
,, 136,	line 10	,,	'had'	,,	'has'
,, 144,	,, 13	,,	'...'	after	'party'
,, 152,	footnote 39*a*	,,	'water were'	for	'water-were'
,, 153,	,, 41	,,	'incursions'	,,	'ncursions'
,, 163,	line 5	,,	'Gentlemen'	,,	'Gentleman'
,, 165,	footnote 9	,,	'Lachman'	after	'Rai'
,, 169,	line 23	,,	'the'	before	'school'
,, 170,	,, 7	,,	'grievously'	for	'cruelly'
,, 171	,, 6	,,	'he'	,,	'the' after 'dinner'
,, 181	,, 16	,,	'10'	,,	'19'
,,	,, footnote	,,	'11*a*'	,,	'11*c*'
,,	,, ,, 12	,,	','	,,	';' after 'discouraged'
,, 189,	line 16	,,	'Balasore'	,,	'Balassore'
,, 192,	footnote 92	,,	wrappers'	,,	'rappers'
,,	,, line 21	,,	'silk and cotton'	,,	'silk and silk cotton'
,, 203,	lines 18-20	from	'to use ... house'	within	quotation
,, 208,	line 1	read	'.'	for	',' after '*dasturis*'
,,	,, footnote 189	,,	'Appendix F'	,,	'Appendix II'
,, 216,	,, 3	,,	','	after	'India'
,,	,, ,, 5	,,	','	,,	'Orme'
,, 218,	line 23	,,	'the'	,,	'in'
,, 221,	,, 15	delete	','	,,	'feeding'
,, 222,	,, 6	read	'...'	,,	'cotton'
,, 226,	footnote 58	,,	'Hadiqat-ul-Aqālīm'	,,	'Hādīqat-ul-Aqālīm'
,, 228,	,, 70	delete	'71'	,,	'70'
,, 262,	line 4	read	'food-stuffs'	for	'food stuffs'

Read 'R. Son' for 'R. Sone' and 'Battle-field' for 'Battle Field' in the map showing the march of Alivardi from Patna to Giriā and the Battle-field of Giriā.